Tros Tyriusque mihi nullo discrimine agetur

The North American Review

VOLUME 238 AUGUST, 1934 NUMBER 2

Apéritif

Romance of Debts and Idleness

HENRY CARTER, in later pages of this issue, argues that there will be several millions of permanently unemployed persons in the United States even if a great deal of prosperity returns. His thesis is widely accepted at present, as are also a number of the ways to care for these unemployed which he describes and which are apparently under consideration in Washington. But Mr. Carter's methods involve a large burden on the Federal payroll, and taxpayers will inevitably object to this and demand some cheaper solution of the problem. There happens, fortunately, to be at least one such solution with attractive aspects, despite a simplicity almost fantastic.

Some while ago Mr. A. A. Boublikoff, who contributes occasionally to this magazine, proposed as a partial solution of the War debts puzzle that American students be sent abroad for cultural purposes at the expense of the foreign nations owing us money, the cost to be deducted from the total of their debt. In this way the so-called transfer problem, principal European excuse for non-payment, would be avoided, and American business interests would be insured against the possibility of foreign invasion of their home markets, which was the basis of the furore which attended Secretary Hull's hint to England concerning payment in kind. The theory was that no foreign nation could refuse to pay its debts in a way which would not take gold out of its own borders or disrupt international trade. There is now a good deal of room for doubt of this theory, but it was a good enough one at the time, and the proposal was sound. We should have got something of cultural value, perhaps saved a bit in taxes for education and not looked quite the improvident dupes, so far as our loans to the Allies were concerned, that we now do.

However, Mr. Boublikoff's idea was merely to approach the War debts problem in a realistic manner; he was not specifically concerned with unemployment. The students who would have benefited by his plan largely come from families able to support them in one degree or another of comfort. But if we twist his idea into a scheme for relieving our government of the expense of caring for unemployed persons, it takes on an even more admirable appearance.

Copyright, 1934, by North American Review Corporation. All rights reserved.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Instead of handing all those billions of dollars to Mr. Roosevelt for distribution among our needy, we ought to hand our needy to our debtors for distribution of food, shelter and clothing while we have no useful employment to occupy them.

The debtor countries, of course, have their own unemployment and budget problems, and would hardly accept such a proposal with undiluted enthusiasm. But unless they could show that it was an impossible strain on their resources they would have either to consent or face the so-called odium of wilful default, an appearance of which they are now turning handsprings to avoid. France, Germany, Italy and England all have splendid merchant marines, so they would not need to send money out of their own countries to pay for transportation across the ocean. Once across, the Americans would be good spenders (why not?), and if there is anything in the theory that a rapid circulation of money makes for good times, their visit ought to stir up business tremendously, thus increasing tax collections and facilitating payment of their upkeep.

It is a pretty little circle. For instance, in some of our debtor nations there has been considerable agitation for large governmental spending programmes. Nowhere else has it taken hold as it has in America, but its proponents would doubtless be pleased at a scheme like this, which would accomplish the same effect and not dot the landscape with needless architecture and statuary. Stimulation of heavy industry is the aim, principally, of governmental spending programmes, and the Americans' persistent use of railroads and steamships ought to keep it very busy indeed making replacements and additional equipment. Also, existing architecture and statuary, considering the American propensity for souvenirs, would probably need extensive repairs themselves—if the natives cared to bother.

It is undeniably a pretty little circle. Without the burden on our public and private purses of supporting unemployed millions, this country would return quickly to prosperity. Then the foreign countries could more easily export to us their products and, becoming still more prosperous, might eventually be so pleased with the arrangement that they would want to borrow billions of dollars from us again—perhaps even fight another war on our credit. However, that would be another question.

II

But what of the emigrants themselves? Would they object to being shipped abroad in carload lots? Not many of them, surely. For most it would be a unique opportunity to see the world at somebody else's expense—a much more pleasant occupation than staying at home on the job. It might even be difficult to persuade them to return to their jobs when prosperity recreated them.

With Hitler shooting even high government officials, France rioting on the slightest provocation, Austria exploding bombs every few minutes and many other countries in a chronic state of agitation, it might be thought dangerous for the emigrants to send them abroad just now. But aside from the alternative danger of starving at home, there are one or two other considerations with which to answer such an objection. Admittedly, there is a strong possibility of war in Europe in the near future. However, if five or six millions of Americans were milling about the countryside, the possibility would materially lessen. For

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one thing, most of them would insist on taking their cars abroad with them (even unemployed Americans all have cars), and European highways, constructed for a much less abundant motoring life than our own, could hardly be expected to carry the burden of warfare and the burden of these Americans at the same time. No one who knows our automotive habits would give the military traffic an even chance if it came to a showdown between the two.

As a further obstacle to war there is the unconquerable curiosity of Americans, particularly when idle. At home they have a faculty of getting in the way of people building buildings, cluttering up the sidewalk before any kind of display, gathering in great multitudes to watch athletes race, jump, play golf, pummel each other, or simply sit on flag-poles. This characteristic curiosity is so intense that it would not permit the emigrants to stay away from the field of battle. Americans would surround the gunners of an artillery battery, asking questions, fingering mechanisms, tripping up officers and men, so demoralizing every one that firing could not continue. Tanks would be so thoroughly investigated that nothing could make them run again. Airplanes would be prevented from leaving the ground by idle groups of inquisitors or, if they did rise, would find their bombs tampered with and their machine guns jammed or dismantled. All the varied mechanical paraphernalia of modern warfare would come under the innocent but devastating curiosity of the neutrals and the vast bulk of it would be rendered useless. Of course, if the combatants insisted on going ahead with hand-to-hand encounters, there would be cheers from the Americans on the sidelines—but also a bedlam of kibitzing advice and no small amount of old-egg-throwing and Bronx cheers besides. The soldiery, not being paid as well as a Primo Carnera, could hardly stomach such ridicule for long. And European governments, at last seeing the virtue of our contention that reduced armaments would enable them to pay their debts (seeing it, of course, in the sudden prosperity of American spending), might thereupon proceed to disarm.

So, with prosperity promised for creditor and debtors alike, peace as nearly assured as it can be in so unstable a world, and a long-deferred good time in prospect for the unemployed, why not try the scheme? The answer just possibly may be that the European countries do not care sufficiently about their obligations to fall in even with so eminently logical a proposal. It seems too bad.

W. A. D.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

China and World Peace

By Sao-Ke Alfred Sze

The Chinese opposition to a Japanese Monroe Doctrine

In the last few days many eyes have been attracted to the Far East and particularly to those territories which are so often termed the cradle of conflict or the tinder box of Asia. War vessels have been despatched under forced draft, fleets have been hastily assembled and, if some press reports are to be credited, expeditionary forces have been held ready for embarkation. And why these warlike preparations, it may be asked? As it now appears, simply because a minor consular official had absented himself from his post without advising his superiors. The vagaries of this unfortunate man will have served a most useful purpose if they reveal upon what a slender thread hangs the peace of the world.

Briefly stated, the situation is that Japan, in violation of her covenants as a member of the League of Nations and as a signatory to such important multilateral international agreements as the Washington Nine Power Treaty of 1922, and the Kellogg Peace Pact of 1928, has, by force of arms, seized and now controls a vast area of Chinese territory, containing great natural resources and a population of more than thirty millions. Thus, not only has the balance of political power in the Far East been destroyed, and the commercial and other interests of the Western powers in that part of the world placed in jeopardy, but an example has been presented to the world of the aggrandizement of a state at the expense of the rights and interests of a friendly neighboring state, and by means that are in open and flagrant violation of those standards of international right, which, with especial effort since the Great War, the civilized world has sought to establish. Added to this is the evidence, abundantly offered, that Japan is not yet satiated by the gains she has thus far secured, but, upon the contrary, awaits only the occasion most agreeable to herself to increase these gains.

Japan's present policies in the Far East are plainly indicated for her acts conform with precision to a general plan which has, upon more than one occasion, been frankly stated by her political and military leaders.

This policy, stated in its most general terms, is that Japan shall dominate, politically and commercially, the Far East, and allow no considerations of treaty obligations, or respect for the rights of other nations, to stand in the way of this achievement. Included within this purpose is the intention to extend Japan's political control over

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such areas of eastern Asia as she may think necessary for the realization of her desires. The extension of her sovereignty over Korea, her acquisition of a lease of the Kwantung Peninsula, the imposition, in 1915, upon China of the treaties which were based upon the infamous Twenty-One Demands which she then made upon China, and her recent acts in Manchuria, including the establishment of the puppet state of Manchukuo, have been but steps in the execution of this general plan to bring all of eastern Asia so fully under Japan's domination that she will be able to exclude or expel from that area any political, financial or commercial interests which she may deem prejudicial to conceived interests of her own.

II

In attempted justification of her acts, already committed or proposed to be committed, Japanese writers and statesmen have declared that Japan is entitled to enforce in the Far East what they have termed an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine, which, inferentially, is asserted to have the same political, legal and ethical justification as that possessed by the Monroe Doctrine which, for more than a hundred years, the United States has asserted its right and intention to uphold.

When examined, however, the Japanese and the American doctrines are found to differ in vital respects. In fact, they exhibit only slight and superficial resemblances.

The American doctrine, so far as it has won recognition and acceptance from other countries, is based upon the valid principle of self-defense—in other words, the prevention of the development upon the American continents of conditions which will endanger the peace of the United States. The increase of the territorial or other political interests of non-American, and especially of European, powers upon the American continents, the United States has held, will create, or tend to create, that danger. The United States, has, therefore, served notice upon the world that it will not permit such an increase, however brought about. As a corollary to this proposition, the United States has at times found it advisable to use its powerful influence with certain Central or South American states to cause them to correct conditions which, under generally acknowledged principles of international law, might justify European states in intervening for that purpose.

The American doctrine has not been directed against the continued possession by European powers of such colonies as they may already have in the Americas or in the waters adjacent thereto. Nor does the United States put forward its doctrine in justification of an extension of its sovereignty or political control over additional areas of land.

The American doctrine has not been used as an excuse or justification for interference by the United States with the purely internal affairs of any other American state. On the contrary, its consistent aim and effect has been to protect those states from such external aggression. Thus, to quote one of the most emphatic statements of the doctrine, namely, that by Secretary of State Olney, in 1895: the doctrine "does not contemplate any interference in the internal affairs of any American State or in the relations between it and other American States. It does not justify any attempt on our part to change the established form of government of any American State or to prevent the people

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of such State from altering that form according to their own will and pleasure. The rule in question has but a single purpose and object. It is that no European Power or combination of European Powers shall forcibly deprive an American State of the right and power of self-government and shaping for itself its own political fortunes and destinies. . . . The States of America, South, as well as North, by geographical proximity, by natural sympathy, by similarity of governmental constitutions, are friends and allies, commercially and politically, of the United States. To allow the subjugation of any of them by an European Power is, of course, to completely reverse the situation, and signifies the loss of all the advantages incident to natural relations to us."

Though thus in a position, materially speaking, to exercise a control over the other American states wider than that covered by the Monroe Doctrine, the United States has never asserted a right to do so. Thus, as the basis of the Monroe Doctrine, or of any other doctrine, the United States has not sought for itself any commercial privileges or opportunities for financial and other economic exploitation from which other countries were to be excluded. And, as I have already said, never, standing upon that doctrine, has the United States sought to extend its territorial sovereignty over areas recognized to lie within the boundaries of the other American states.

III

I have made the foregoing statements with regard to the American doctrine, not with the view of defending the United States against any possible criticism, for it certainly does not lie with me, a non-citizen of the United States and the official representative of another country, to appear as counsel in her behalf. What I have said I have said in order to show that the so-called Japanese Monroe Doctrine is something far different from the American Monroe Doctrine.

This Asiatic doctrine, as expounded by Japanese public men, resembles the American doctrine only in so far as it asserts that it is contrary to the vital interests of Asiatic states, and of Japan in particular, that Western powers should increase their political interests in eastern Asia.

In support of such a doctrine for Asia, thus limited, much can be said. Much can also be said, though this goes beyond the scope of a Monroe Doctrine, in justification of the desire of Asiatic powers to obtain a decrease, and ultimate total annulment, of such forms of political control as other powers now claim the right to exercise within their borders.

However, the Japanese, when they speak of an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine, have much in mind beyond those purely defensive features. Under their doctrine they assert for Japan a right to dominate in eastern Asia—a claim which carries with it a right to subordinate to Japanese political and economic interests the political and economic interests of the other Asiatic states. If Japan conceives that she needs additional territory, whether for political or economic reasons, she asserts the right to take it. If she needs preferential commercial treatment, in addition to the advantages already enjoyed by her by reason of her geographical position, she deems that she is justified in demanding this at the point of the bayonet as she did in 1915 when she

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

presented to China her infamous Twenty-One Demands. I describe these demands as infamous for they have been so regarded by all the rest of the world.

The fact is that there are abundant reasons for believing that Japan, since before the Chinese-Japanese War of 1894–1895, has had the desire, and to that end has pursued the deliberate policy, to make herself politically supreme in the Far East—a supremacy which will mean the subjection of all other eastern Asiatic states to the political will of Japan, if not to the actual incorporation of the territories in the Japanese Empire, and, as a necessary consequence, the annulment of such political and commercial rights as the Western powers now possess in eastern Asia or perhaps in all Asia. As a step towards the realization of this ambition, she prepared for and fought the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895, as a result of which she obtained not only a huge indemnity, but the annexation of the large island of Formosa and the Pescadores group of smaller islands. In 1904–1905 she fought Russia, as a result of which she was able not only to take over from Russia the leased Chinese Kwantung Peninsula, and Russia's other interests in Southern Manchuria, but to be free to annex the Kingdom of Korea which she effected in 1910. In 1915 came the Twenty-One Demands, which, had they been secured in full, would have meant that all China would then and there have passed under the political control of Japan. As it was, Japan was able, by a threat of war within fifty-one hours, to obtain a considerable increase in her political and economic interests in China, and especially in the Manchurian provinces of China. In 1914 Japan seized and militarily occupied the great Chinese province of Shantung, from which eight years later she reluctantly agreed to withdraw only under the pressure of an adverse world opinion. In 1918, in violation of promises given, she attempted to bring the eastern Siberian regions of Russia under her political domination, but found her resources then inadequate to hold them for more than a few years.

In negotiating the Lansing-Ishii Agreement of 1917, Japan sought, as Secretary Lansing has testified, to obtain a recognition by the United States, which recognition the United States refused to give, that Japan had, as *vis-à-vis* China, a political position superior to that of the other powers. In the negotiations leading up to the creation of the International Banking Consortium of 1920, she again put forward, but again vainly, the same claim.

At the Washington Conference of 1921–1922, Japan, because of her acts of the preceding years, appeared essentially as a defendant in the discussions that were had as to Pacific and Far Eastern questions. Japan then, in addition to other special agreements, signed the Nine Power Treaty by which she engaged herself, in common with the other signatory powers, "to respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China," and "to provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government."

IV

It was then the hope of the other powers that Japan had been persuaded to abandon her imperialistic ambitions with regard to the mainland of eastern

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Asia, and, for a number of years following the Washington Conference it seemed as though this hope would be fulfilled. During this time the more liberal and moderately minded Japanese statesmen were in control of the Government of Japan.

This enlightened policy proved, however, very objectionable to the more imperialistically minded portions of the Japanese people, and especially to Japan's military and naval officials. Those latter, using the special powers given them by the Japanese Constitution and by Imperial ordinances, were able, on September 18, 1931, to take matters into their own hands and to enter upon that course of military aggression in Manchuria which has continued to the present time.

That the military element is still strongly dominant in Japan is shown by the fact that the Japanese budget, which was recently approved by the Japanese Diet, met with little real opposition notwithstanding that forty-four per cent of its total was devoted to military expenses. These military expenses alone amount to almost the total regular revenues of the Japanese Government, and the deficit has to be met by borrowings.

Many of Japan's spokesmen have sought to make Japan's policies a part of a wider purpose which they have termed a Pan-Asiatic Movement, or "Asia for Asiatics," or, stated in plain terms, the eradication from eastern Asia, or, indeed, from all Asia, of every vestige of European or American political interest, including colonies, dependencies, leased areas, and extra-territorial and other jurisdictional rights. Those who have advanced this doctrine have sought to make it appear that Japan is seeking to advance not simply her own interests but those of the other Asiatic peoples—the Chinese, the Siamese, the Indo-Chinese, the Malays and races of British India. This appeal has not met with any approving response from these Asiatics, for it has been evident to them, as it has been to Americans and Europeans, that Japan, so far from having any real regard for the rights and interests of peoples other than her own, has held those rights and interests in contempt and has not hesitated to disregard them when she has felt it to be to her own interest to do so. The real purpose of Japan, too obvious to be concealed, is to dominate, in an imperialistic way, the entire Far East. Indeed, her public men have not hesitated to say that henceforth her will is alone to determine what shall be done in the Far East, whether by the United States, by European nations or by the more than fifty nations united into the League of Nations. She alone is to decide what the situation demands, and this without regard to what her treaty obligations may be. This arrogant assertion Japan calls "maintaining the peace" in eastern Asia. This peace, she has declared, must be on terms and conditions which will be fixed wholly by herself. Thus, we find General Araki, Japanese Minister of War, as reported in the London *Times* of October 4, 1932, declaring: "It is no idle boast to say that if anything obstructs Japan's mission of peace, we are ready to do away with it." In other words, not until Japan has obtained all that she wants in the way of additional territory or special political and economic interests, will conditions in the Far East be stabilized.

There have been some Japanese spokesmen who have outlined for Japan policies even more grandiose

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than those that I have described. These super-imperialists have asserted that the time will come when Japan will be able and disposed to extend her control across the Pacific and even to regions outside the littorals of the ocean. Such views are, of course, so absurd as to be unworthy of discussion. Yet they have a significance in that they indicate the heights to which the confidence of the Japanese in their own powers can rise.

I have devoted the time that I have to reviewing Japan's policies and acts in order to show the truly grave situation that Japan, by her recent acts, has created in the Far East. These acts are sufficiently serious in themselves, but they assume their full significance only when they are shown to be, as I have attempted to show them to be, steps toward the realization of a comprehensive imperialistic programme. The other nations of the world know the issue that is presented to them, and, in the light of that certain knowledge, it remains for them to determine what they shall do to meet that issue.

It would seem that this issue as I have thus far presented it is a sufficiently grave one. But it is seen to be still more portentous when regard is had to the character of the government which Japan possesses. This government is one under which it is specifically provided that its military and naval branches shall not be subject to control by its civil authorities. Every other constitutionally organized state in the world has deemed it to be of absolutely vital importance that its foreign as well as its domestic policies should be determined by its civil authorities and that its armed forces should exist solely for the purpose of enabling the state to carry those policies into effect. In Japan, however, this is not so. The military and naval forces themselves decide what policies it is proper for them to pursue. Thus, in the case of Japan there are absent those restraints upon military acts of aggression which, in all other countries, are deemed absolutely essential. The fact is that a country organized as is Japan, is, at all times, a menace to international peace.

V

I will now speak of the implications which the recent acts of Japan have for the entire civilized world. Since the Great War, all the nations have sought, by every means within their power, to create agencies for the peaceful settlement of international disputes to the end that situations likely to provoke war may be prevented from arising, or, if they should arise, that they may not lead to a resort to war, or to acts of war, for their settlement. To this end, as regards specifically the Far East, the agenda of the Washington Conference on the Limitation of Armament was broadened so as to include a consideration of Pacific and Far Eastern questions—a consideration which led to the signing of a number of multilateral agreements, the most important of which was the Nine Power Treaty. To the same end of preventing the arising of controversies which may endanger the maintenance of peace, many European treaties, such as those signed at Locarno in 1925, have been entered into. As a guarantee that such international disputes as may arise shall be settled without the employment of force practically all the nations of the world, including China, Japan, Russia and the United States, have, by the Kellogg Peace Pact, renounced war as an instrument of national policy in their relations with one another, and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have declared that the settlement or solution of all disputes or conflicts of whatever nature or of whatever origin they may be, which may arise among them, shall never be sought except by pacific means.

As regards specific modes of peaceful settlement of international controversies, hundreds of treaties have been entered into by individual states providing for recourse to commissions of enquiry, to boards of conciliation, to tribunals of arbitration, or to judicial bodies such as the Permanent Court of International Justice established in 1920. But the one great agency for the maintenance of peace which the nations have created is, of course, the League of Nations. As declared in the Preamble of its Constitution, the purpose of the League is, "to promote international coöperation and to achieve international peace and security by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war, by the prescription of open, just and honorable relations between nations, by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as the actual rule of conduct among governments, and by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations in the dealings of organized peoples with one another."

Specifically, the states who have become members of the League of Nations have pledged themselves not only to respect but to preserve, as against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League. Also they have agreed that, if there should arise between them any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, they will submit the matter either to arbitration or judicial settlement or to inquiry by the Council of the League. They have further agreed that they will carry out in good faith any arbitral award that may be made or any judicial decision that may be rendered. If inquiry by the Council is the mode of settlement resorted to, it is provided by the Covenant of the League that, if the Council is unable to bring about, by conciliatory means, a settlement satisfactory to the parties to the dispute, it shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto. The parties are not obligated to accept these recommendations, but it is provided by the Covenant that, if this report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by its members other than the representatives of the parties to the dispute, there shall be no resort to war against any party which complies with the recommendations of the Council. It may be added that the Covenant further provides that the inquiry, the report and the making of recommendations may be transferred from the Council to the Assembly of the League, and that this has been done in the present pending Sino-Japanese controversy.

VI

As regards the handling of the Sino-Japanese controversy by the League it is to be noted that in every respect China has fulfilled her obligations as a member of the League. There can be no dispute as to this. When attacked by Japan, she immediately brought the controversy before the League, and since then she has done nothing to render a settlement more difficult. This is testified to by the Lytton Commission, and by the formal report of the Assembly of the League, accepted on February 24, 1933. As regards Japan,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

however, both the Lytton Report and the Report of the Assembly set forth that Japan, by a long series of acts, has constantly aggravated the situation, the most serious of these acts being the attack upon the Chinese city, Shanghai, the creation and recognition of the puppet state of Manchukuo, and the Japanese military operations in the province of Jehol and south of the Great Wall of China. Reinforcing this authoritative contrast between the records of China and Japan as members of the League, Lord Cecil of Chelwood said, "We cannot evade the conclusion that throughout this matter China has acted as a loyal and honorable member of the League of Nations and many of us feel that it would be a very grave exaggeration to say the same of Japan." In a still later public statement, made in the latter part of 1933, we find Viscount Cecil saying that were he to summarize the broad conclusions of the Assembly as embodied in its Report of February 24, 1933, it would be that "undoubtedly Japan had not acted in accordance with her obligations under the Covenant of the League of Nations." He added that the same might be said of Japan's lack of regard for her obligations under the Nine Power Washington Treaty and of her promises made upon more than one occasion to the Council of the League. "I do not think," he said, "that any of these facts are capable of dispute."

Here I would like to repeat what I said as the representative of my country before the Council of the League at one of the earlier meetings for the examination of the situation created by Japan in Asia. These words are as true and as vital to world security now as then, indeed more so. I said:

"The Covenant and the Pact of Paris are the corner stones of the world edifice of peace that have been so laboriously erected in the years since the World War and if they crumble, the edifice collapses. For is it likely that the nations who witnessed this tragic collapse of the Covenant and the Pact of Paris at its first great test, with all its dire consequences throughout the East, would assemble quietly at Geneva to disarm? Would they not rather draw the conclusion that, after all, each state must rely on its own armed forces, and on these alone? Finally if we fail and the world is thrown back on suspicious nationalism, hostile alliances and a race in armaments, if the East is plunged into a state of turmoil, what chance have we of securing effective coöperation in connection with the financial and economic crisis that bears so heavily upon the world?

"The crisis widens and deepens daily, almost hourly, and we are aware, all of us, that only far-reaching and close coöperation between the civilized nations can avert danger. However remote and irrelevant this disturbance in the Far East may seem to the West, engrossed in its pressing cares, the web of fate binds us all together and unless we can coöperate effectively in this grave emergency, we shall fail in disarmament, we shall fail to inspire any confidence in international security and order and we shall fail to grapple with the world economic crisis."

It may be that some may think that in making these statements and in painting this dark picture, I am carried away by indignation which few, however, but little acquainted with the facts, will regard as unrighteous. In any event, I am able to fortify my position by quoting similar views of emi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nent statesmen, of other nationalities, whose territory may not be immediately involved but whose people have as ultimate a stake in the situation as have mine. To begin with I shall quote from the famous letter of Mr. Stimson when he was Secretary of State, addressing Senator Borah, Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate. His judicial words and restrained language should dismiss for all time the contention of some Japanese officials who wish to believe that the Nine Power Treaty was entered upon in ignorance of Chinese conditions and that recent alleged developments release Japan from all obligation to observe its stipulations.

"The program for the protection of China from outside aggression," wrote Mr. Stimson, "is an essential part in the harmonious steps taken for the purpose of aligning the conscience and public opinion of the world in favor of a system of orderly development by the law of nations including the settlement of all controversies by methods of justice and peace instead of by arbitrary force. The program for the protection of China from outside aggression is an essential part of any such development. The signatories and adherents of the Nine Power Treaty rightly felt that the orderly and peaceful development of the 400,000,000 people inhabiting China was necessary to the peaceful welfare of the entire world and that no program for the welfare of the world as a whole could afford to neglect the welfare and protection of China.

"The recent events which have taken place in China, far from indicating the advisability of any modification of the treaties we have been discussing, have tended to bring home the vital importance of the faithful observance of the covenants therein to all the nations interested in the Far East. It is not necessary in that connection to inquire into the causes of the controversy or attempt to apportion the blame between the two nations which are unhappily involved; for regardless of cause or responsibility, it is clear beyond peradventure that a situation has developed which can not, under any circumstances, be reconciled with the obligations of the covenants of these two treaties, and that if the treaties had been faithfully observed such a situation could not have arisen.

"That is the view of this Government. We see no reason for abandoning the enlightened principles which are embodied in these treaties. We believe that this situation would have been avoided had these covenants been faithfully observed, and no evidence has come to us to indicate that a due compliance with them would have interfered with the adequate protection of the legitimate rights in China of the signatories of those treaties and their nationals.

"In the past our Government as one of the leading powers on the Pacific Ocean has rested its policy upon an abiding faith in the future of the people of China and upon the ultimate success in dealing with them of the principles of fair play, patience and mutual good will. We appreciate the immensity of the task which lies before her statesmen in the development of her country and its government. The delays in her progress, the instability of her attempts to secure a responsible government were foreseen by Messrs. Hay and Hughes and their contemporaries and were the very obstacles which the policy of the 'open door'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was designed to meet. We concur with those statesmen, representing all the nations, in the Washington Conference who decided that China was entitled to the time necessary to accomplish her development."

VII

In conclusion it can not be said that the issue today which is clearly the choice of peace or war, of prosperity or destruction, has come as a surprise to the observant. More than ten years ago Dr. Hornbeck, now in charge of Far Eastern affairs in the Department of State, wrote in his work on contemporary politics: "If China can develop strength to defend her own integrity, the peace of the Orient may be preserved. If the *partition of China once seriously begins* nothing can save the Far East for the next several decades from being a theatre of aggressive conflict and political redistribution."

It is proper for me to recall that in the great emergency that overtook, and nearly overcame, the world in 1914 China entered the War to defend the position which she holds today, that treaties and covenants are not scraps of paper to be tossed aside when their stipulations prove inconvenient. We hope and believe that this view will be upheld by the nations who have solemnly guaranteed the sanctity of treaties and whose leaders have on many occasions declared that the inviolability of these instruments is the hope of the world.

Come what may, China will never surrender an inch of her territory nor any of her sovereign rights under stress of military force which she condemns and is determined to resist to the best of her ability. This is the creed of my Government and of my people today. The treaties and the covenants to which I have referred are in our judgment the bulwark of peace and prosperity today, in the West as well as in the East, in Europe as in Asia. Should they fail us, however, I would be less than candid if I did not state that my countrymen will leave nothing untried to maintain their independence, to safeguard the honor of their Government and the integrity of their territory.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Is the Lid Off?

By Henry Morton Robinson

Virtuous heads shake over the nation's sudden embracing of strong drinks, gambling and destruction of censorships. Are we really in for a debauch?

It was unbearable, and we bore it for a long, long time.

An oppressive stone lay on our vitals, and the sickness of restraint-too-long-endured swam in our bloodstream. A weirdly onerous morality encumbered our lives, and the fingerpost of restrictive prudery pointed out the way we should go. Censorship and Prohibition checked the normal outflow of our appetitive energy, and Puritanic sluice-gates diverted it into furtive channels, expensive to society and toxic to ourselves. In retrospect, we seemed to be moving through one of those harrowing nightmares that suffocate the dreamer beneath intolerable burdens of anxiety and guilt.

Then, almost without preliminaries, we felt the stone being lifted, the weights fell from our limbs. Hesitantly, as if doubting the testimony of our senses, we gazed about the American terrain. We saw the Eighteenth Amendment repealed so passionately and suddenly that even the whiskey manufacturers were startled and unprepared. The rest of us accepted our thrice-distilled blessings in the spirit of mirage-swallowers. "It is a demented vision, a date-palm dream," we told ourselves as we stood before pyramids of polished glass and heard the gurgle of legal liquor. But scarcely had we accustomed ourselves to the sensations of sampling honest wine and lifting full-bodied beer to our lips, when we heard the clear accents of a United States District Judge telling us that it was no crime to own a copy of *Ulysses*. Persons who had acclaimed this masterpiece ten years previously, by paying forty dollars in Paris for a single copy, and were then obliged to smuggle it past customs officials like a baneful drug or pornographic postcard, could now buy the Saga of Dublin in any bookshop, read it in any library, and watch it find its own level among the literary productions of the age. Surely, a new yeast was at work in American life, and the joyousness of its leaven shone in our eyes and voices as we greeted each other in bookstores and cafés.

Then in April, 1934, with Prohibition scrapped and genius legalized, Governor Lehman of New York signed a bill permitting open betting on the race-tracks of the Empire State. True, bets had always been made in New York, and always will be made wherever blood and horses run, but it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

required the loosening influence of the Time Genius to bring it out into the open, to make it a legitimate, tax-yielding activity. The aleatory instinct of human beings, hitherto classified as a crime, has in recent months managed to get itself recognized as a normal and not necessarily degrading outlet of human energy. Thus another Puritanic barrier—one of the oldest and highest—comes tumbling down, and the boundaries of personal latitude are again extended by statute amid general applause.

A more intimate yet very noticeable extension of this personal latitude is taking place in the advertising and sale of birth-control appliances. Now few persons are quite naïve enough to believe all the claims made for these marvelous devices; emphatically, the writer disclaims his intention of recommending even the best of them. The miracle is, not that they prevent conception, but that no one seems alarmed by their unabashed appearance in our midst. They now fill our drugstore windows and are advertised in our home-going magazines. Five years ago any drugstore window displaying these wares would have been smashed by ardent reformers trumpeting the high moral note, but today it's a regular over-the-counter business, with never a blush or even a preliminary purchase of toothpaste.

Other straws, and some good-sized lumber too, dash by on the rising wind of anti-Puritanism. The long fight to make divorce a private matter between a dissatisfied man and woman—somewhat the equivalent of a surgical operation when other, milder therapy has failed—gains ground in every State in the Union. In Vermont, that granite-walled trench of conservatism, a man set on obtaining a divorce is no longer obliged to go through the vile contortion of hiring a professional co-respondent. Either party can claim "intolerable cruelty" as cause enough for a divorce, as indeed it is. New York State, which shares with South Carolina the grim distinction of having the most archaic divorce law in the civilized world, came within three votes of passing a humane bill of divorcement this year. Only the maneuvers of a stubborn, reactionary Roman Catholic lobby held down the lid of revolt in the State legislature. But it was like trying to put a plug in Vesuvius. Next year, or the year after, the citizens of New York State will insist upon having a divorce law more nearly in consonance with the age.

Minor shivers of the anti-Puritan upheaval persistently jiggle the social seismograph. The nude human body grows commoner and less self-conscious both in life and art; anti-nicotine crusades are voluntarily dropped by discouraged reformers who can no longer convince anybody that tobacco is the original Shrub of Evil. Cock-fighting steps out into the open; censorship of stage and movies is pleasurably less rigid. Staid old Massachusetts entertained legislative proposals for a State lottery this year; police officers are rebuked by busy judges for bringing in "number players" and slot-machine gamblers. And even Mr. Voliva, apostle of the world's flatness, and archetype of the Ban Militant on All Forms of Mortal Pleasuring, finds himself unable to get elected to his own school board. Undeniably, a new spirit of liberalism walks abroad, and a freer temper flashes forth as the moldy tablets of the Puritan decalogue are smashed by well-aimed rocks of protest.

The two most conspicuous facts about this anti-Puritan protest are: (1) its be-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

latedness, and (2) the whole-hearted enthusiasm behind it. If commentators are somewhat at a loss to explain why the United States waited so long to make a demi-volt in public morality, they are even more puzzled by the nonchalance of the demi-volters. Today there is almost nothing of guilt on the public conscience as it drinks, gambles and peeps into *Ulysses*. (As Judge John M. Woolsey pointed out, "Every grown person knows all the four letter words, anyway.") Apparently, nobody is suffering from those apprehensions of social ruin that were once the chief ammunition of Thunderers-in-the-Index. The concept of "sin" has quite completely disappeared from our lexicons, and we have somehow dared to assume publicly what we long ago decided privately—that love, alcohol and cigarettes are capable of a use and interpretation not necessarily linked with hell.

How did it all happen? And why, fellow-citizens, did it take so long?

II

The mysterious wrist-lock and full-Nelson by which Puritanism pinned the American people to the mat for three long centuries is one of the great puzzles of the Western world. Why an energetic race, taking possession of a new continent packed with material wealth, should have submitted for three hundred years to a guilt-ridden, tight-lipped morality imported by some starving Calvinists—and how the quavering voice of prudery and reform could so completely overtop the bellowing lust of a pioneer people—these are questions that no social investigator has yet answered. I believe, however, that certain neglected aspects of American history offer broad clues that must be followed if we are to understand the long reign of Puritanism and account for its contemporary crack-up.

It is fairly easy to understand why the original colonists of New England were a dankly moral crowd. English though they were, their theology came straight from Scotland, a land where a stinting diet of oatmeal, a bleak climate and no economic surplus to squander on alleviating joys had made of religion a gloomy hair shirt that kept neither soul nor body warm. Anti-papists all, they could not appeal to the maternal, comfortably upholstered Virgin to mediate between them and the gaunt wrath of God the Father; they had nothing but the Old Testament to ward off his angry chastisements. Prayer and procreation were their only outs; they were powerful in both, but from neither did they obtain the ecstatic relief that makes love and prayer the two happiest of emotional safety-valves.

All this melancholy furniture they imported to America, where for the first few decades they faithfully reproduced the barren existence they had left behind them. Bred in a philosophy of scant, they were spiritually geared to the early privations of Colonial life. But imperceptibly the new country began to creep up on them; its fish-crammed seas, its fertile fields, snug harbors and heavily timbered forests soon became sources of tidy profit; this profit quickly multiplied itself into surplus capital; fleets, mortgages, rum and slaves engaged this capital, and very shortly a few of our first New England families began to accumulate earthly riches in addition to those they were diligently storing up in heaven.

Another race might have laid aside heaven at this point, and gone completely Mammon. But not the Puritan, since, under a convenient interpretation

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of his Calvinistic creed, he was not obliged to divorce profit from religion. Every Calvinist hoped and believed that he was among the number of God's Elect, and while no one could be positive, while on earth, of his Heavenly Election, it was very comforting to receive from God strong cash assurances that you were on His list. Such testimony enabled you with a clear conscience to carry on His work, whether by putting usurious thumbscrews on less godly men, or by trafficking in benighted heathen from the coast of Africa. This cashbox theology, which very sincerely made financial success the outward mark of God's presence in one's life, was the origin I believe of the "virtue for profit" motif that still dominates American morality.

But this Pharisaic, property-supporting code of the Eastern merchant was not the only morality being generated in America. As early as 1700 another type of behavior was coloring the crests of those pioneer waves that broke across the American continent. This "frontier morality" was a lustier, honester, more indigenous cult than Puritanism; it was a morality of men without women; of men, also, who were the overflow, the misfits, failures and rebels of the Eastern system. Having no property to entail or wives to fear, they drank, gambled, danced, fornicated, killed and chewed tobacco with a zest that one might have expected from sons living in the bosom of an opulent mother. Frontier morality was our first native American product, the purest culture we ever developed here, and only now are we beginning to refer to it with the nostalgia of men who didn't value a good thing when they had it.

To the mercantile East, however, the ribaldry and license of the frontier camps was anathema—not only because it reeked of Beelzebub but (and this is much more important) it marked the beginnings of a powerful party of opposition, a democratic organism hostile to the Eastern oligarchy. It is extremely difficult to give this frontier party a local habitation and a name, for at various times its centre has been found in every State west of the Alleghenies, and its leaders have ranged from Andrew Jackson to Franklin D. Roosevelt. Yet it has a constant characteristic—it has always been composed of men with a strong agrarian bias and an active distaste for Eastern manners, morals and financial methods. Furthermore, it has rarely been in control of our Federal Government. Whenever it has succeeded in gaining control, shrieks of alarm were heard up and down the Eastern seaboard, and mingled with these patriotic noises was the shrill whinny of the Puritan at bay. When, for example, Andrew Jackson descended upon Washington in 1832, the mercantile East saw a democratic danger to be held sternly in check, an opponent to be discredited by every stainful means. Witness, therefore, the reception accorded to Jackson in the New England press. Warnings of danger to the Federal banking system were paralleled by descriptions of the licentious drinking, smutty stories and concubinage that went on among Jackson's henchmen. To the Puritan mind these things actually went hand in hand. Two of the unsolved problems in the life of my old grammar school principal (a Deerfield Puritan) were: how could a great statesman like Abraham Lincoln tell improper stories, and how could that otherwise blameless American character, Chief Justice White, chew tobacco?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

III

As long as there was free land to absorb western emigration, American morality was divided into two mutually exclusive camps: the democratic, wide-open West, and the hard-caste, puritanic East. As the Eastern Puritans grew richer, the spiritual differences between the two regions grew more acute. Externals of dress, manner and diction emphasized these differences, but actually they penetrated much deeper into the realm of what was holy and what was not. Mark Twain, prototype of everything rugged in Western taste and morality, mortally offended Emerson and Longfellow by his "irreverence" at a Cambridge banquet; the irreverence consisted of putting selected lines of their poetry into the mouth of a wandering prospector, juxtaposing the verses so comically that the reader still falls off the hassock with laughter. But not the Cambridge audience; it sat frozenly, then walked out in silence. The Ordeal of Mark Twain was not, as Van Wyck Brooks suggests, that the age forced him to be humorous when he wanted to be a philosopher. His real tragedy was that Eastern prudery emasculated his frontier energy, and docked the native burliness of his wit until it became decorous enough for a Concord Lyceum platform.

This "Lyceum crowd," as Walt Whitman called them, practically caponized our Nineteenth Century culture, and certainly deodorized any uncouth odors wandering in from the West. Until the outbreak of the World War the Eastern mercantile moralists were firmly rooted in the saddle; when they yanked the bit we all gagged, and when they took snuff we all sneezed in unison. As the century turned and the frontier flush faded, the reform elements were busy consolidating the triumphs of mercantile morality, pointing out with prideful truth that this code was putting plenty of cash into everybody's pocket. Doubtless the Iroquois medicine man used the same argument when the buffalo were running well, for it is the happy duty of all professional religionists to prove that their system alone can successfully propitiate the One, the True, the Fat-Producing Deity.

It has never been pointed out, I believe, that the chief reform eras in the United States closely coincide with periods of great material prosperity. The prudish cloaking of the human body, the wrongly-styled "Temperance Movement" and the axe-wielding crusades of vice-crushing evangelists, were the spiritual corollaries of the vast financial expansion that this country witnessed between 1890 and 1917. These were indeed good buffalo years; wages rose steadily and profits were enormous. It was also a time of unmatchable prudery and Puritanism Triumphant. At one time things got so bad in the East that the curator of the Hartford Museum would not permit men and women to view the partially draped Greek statues together. In Malden, Massachusetts, a student could not obtain a copy of Fielding's *Tom Jones* unless he had a note from his doctor or teacher. That sweet innocuous picture "September Morn" was stoned as it hung in a Boston art shop, and Margaret Sanger was arrested in New York City for disseminating birth-control information. San Francisco prostitutes might, as late as 1910, prolong a moribund frontier morality by exposing their wares in uncurtained shop-windows, but in that year Committees of Public Morals

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in New York and Philadelphia were pushing the girls deeper and deeper into back-street shadows. Even the great Canfield was put out of business, and when his famous roulette wheel stopped whirling, a mighty shout went up from the Puritan hosts: "Frontier Morality is dead, and its children are crushed beneath the Heel of Righteousness."

Frontier morality *was* dead, and apparently its children were destroyed forever. But actually now, what was happening to the millions of people whose ancestors had been the human surplus of the Eastern clerkaday world, the misfits and rebels of the mercantile system? As long as there was free land they could stretch their energies across it, but when the public lands were exhausted (around 1890) these restless elements of the population began to seep backward, eastward, into the cities. Here they met immigrant hordes flocking the other way; hard times and the grave labor troubles of the 'Nineties were the direct consequences. Significantly, too, the Democratic Grover Cleveland rose to power in these years, and for a time it seemed to the financial East that the "rabble" was about to have its day. But fortunately for the Eastern dollar-moralists and the Republican party, America discovered its new imperialistic policy just in time. World markets were found for American products, and for another thirty-five years there was Fat (and Fine Morals) for all.

This prolonged era of prosperity elevated Profitable Puritanism to such fanatical heights that it became a crime to sell cigarettes in Kansas or a copy of *Jurgen* in Boston. Then, to top everything, the manufacture and sale of alcohol as a beverage was prohibited forever within the borders of the United States. This was the flood tide of Puritanism; higher the repressive waters could not rise, so they promptly started to ebb. From 1920 onward there was an accelerating decline in private morality; the "lost generation" had its innings, and under the influence of a post-War psychology, even nice women began to absorb gin and smoke cigarettes. Still, as long as prosperity continued, as it did for ten dizzy years of instalment buying, there was a disposition on the part of most Americans to string along with the Public Morality that was stuffing good money into our pay envelopes. So quite apart from what we did in private we continued to offer up public oblations to the gilded calf of Profitable Puritanism.

Not until the bad news broke in 1929 did we fully realize that our morality was printed on the same paper as our stocks and bonds. It was fine stuff while you could cash in on it, but something to write off if you couldn't. So we wrote it off. At the first general election after the crash, the resurgent elements of frontier morality washed over the land again, breaking the altars of the Grand Old Prudy gang, and smothering the advocates of no-longer-profitable-Puritanism under a tidal wave of that traditionally democratic beverage, beer.

It was a glorious victory, and to a long-submerged majority of our people, a mighty gratifying one.

IV

Is the lid off? Will the United States now proceed to enter upon an unrestrained debauch of drunkenness, gambling and sexual excess? Will streetwalkers throng our thoroughfares, while uncensored films, literature and art excite our grossest longings? Jeremiahs

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

are not lacking to predict a hurricane of divorce, filth, drunkenness and venereal disease that will tear us loose from the sweet anchorage of sobriety and sweep us out upon monster-infested seas.

But for at least two reasons I believe that the American people do not intend to be swept from their moorings. In the first place, the indigenous code of *mores* that I have tried to describe under the name "frontier morality" is by no means a clear, unembarrassed thing. Although three centuries of contact with North American soil and climate have had a robust invigorating effect on our physiology, giving us urgent appetites and plenteous means of satisfying them, making us a true "new world" race comparatively free of medieval, European taints—yet there is something more than simple physiology at work among us. Our democratic batter contains a rich mixture of caste-conscious, property-holding ideology, best described by that imported, much-abused term "bourgeois." Drilled in bourgeois doctrine, twenty million home-owners can not go permanently wrong—the banks holding their mortgages will attend to that! The fact that property is always holier than human life (else why should bank vaults burst with idle money, while human hearts burst with jobless despair?) is the best guarantee that Americans will permit no wholesale dumping of those moral restraints which are admittedly the safeguards of a profit-making, profit-taking society. Moreover, as the possibilities of profit return, there will be a partial recrudescence of the old Puritanistic spirit. Clerks will again be cajoled into believing that abstinence, or at least moderation, is the preferred path to the important money. "I want a clear head for the big deal tomorrow," is about as effective an argument for virtue as the moralists of this world have ever thought up.

A second major reason why America is not likely to scrap its fly-wheel of restraint can be found in the new "adult responsibility" clause that is being written into the social contract. For under the pressure of hard times it seems that we are actually growing up—and permitting others to do so. The notion that a grown man or woman should be allowed to make his own moral choices and take the consequences is the index, I believe, of a recently developed maturity in our attitude toward our neighbor and ourselves. Now the acceptance of adult responsibility is the single severest trial that men are ever called upon to meet, and even in the best of cases it is achieved only with hesitation and many defeats. But we were weary of lingering forever on the borders of infantilism, taking our moral and psychic orders from knuckle-rapping schoolmarms, so we broke the ferule of school-marm morality and decided to make a few decisions for ourselves. It was a definite step toward the adulthood to which virile races and individuals aspire. But adulthood presumes responsibility, and it is this newly awakened sense of our responsibility to society and ourselves that will increasingly temper our passions and our lives. The experience gained in trying (and sometimes failing) to rule ourselves will eventually enable us to take the position that men are neither Circean swine nor salvation-struck fanatics, but something infinitely less simple and better-balanced—organisms capable of slow perfection, yet subject to devastating and understandable relapses into their imperfect past. Also,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there is already current among us a suspicion that certain things in this world are, in and by themselves, not hurtful to health, happiness or profit. The Puritans represented alcohol, sex and playing-cards as devices of Evil, but today we regard them merely as three very excellent means of getting through the long and otherwise difficult hours between work and sleep.

There is a final aspect of present day latitudinarianism that compels our attention here. I speak of the shrewdly pragmatic attitude of the government, both Federal and local, toward the milling masses they have been called upon to govern. Our reigning administrators know that they are stoking a rickety social boiler, one that is hissing perilously at the seams as the internal pressure rises. Rather than lock the safety-valve and court a social explosion, our leaders are permitting the boiler to blow off most entertainingly. It is a standard device of wise governments, and one that never fails to bring relief. As taxes mount and governmental regulation of economic life increases it becomes necessary to loosen up the restrictions on the private lives of the populace. Human beings need slack somewhere and the likeliest, most effective form of slack is in their personal pleasurings. A glass of whiskey may never add a cubit to our moral stature, but it can prevent a mile-high blow-up, both personally and socially. Washington fully realizes that we are headed for an era of rather tight economic restriction, and seeks to compensate for this restriction by loosening up on what used to be known as "personal liberties." It doesn't make the economic shackles less binding, but most assuredly it sprinkles a pennyworth of soothing talcum on the chafed, uncomfortable parts.

There is a whole school of malcontents who believe that the contemporary crack-up of Puritanism is merely the prelude to the complete ruin of our social system. It is impossible to assert definitely that such ruin can never overtake us, but a scrutiny of the American soul convinces me that our present condition is not one of decay. It is not our social system that falters now; it is Puritanism that withers and dies. It may jolt Americans to be reminded that Puritanism was once a philosophy of personal liberty, that its founders—Pym, Hampden, Milton—were men who gave to the English-speaking race its first notion of democratic self-government, and exalted the freedom of the individual in matters of faith and conscience. But this primitive Puritanism died long ago; embalmed in a barren theology, it lay like a sepulchral weight upon our lives for scores of years. We do not disintegrate spiritually when we now rise to throw it off and embrace a new morality, a stronger, younger one, native to our hardiest forebears, and indigenous to our rich American soil.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mussolini Muscles In

By G. E. W. Johnson

Hitler's meeting with the Italian Fascist last month showed how completely Mussolini dominates European diplomacy today

One of the most deplorable consequences of the World War was the extension of the boundaries of the Balkans deep into the heart of Europe. The Balkans used to be regarded as a turbulent region in southeastern Europe much addicted to staging palace revolutions, murdering kings in their beds, and waging petty though sanguinary wars. Everything in the world is said to exist for a purpose, and the Balkans existed to furnish an inexhaustible source of melodramatic inspiration to the composers of musical comedy and the concocters of Ruritanian romance. But since that fateful day in June of twenty years ago, when an assassination resulting from a sordid Balkan intrigue set in motion a series of billows that gathered volume as they traveled around the world until they became a tidal wave engulfing all humanity, it has not been easy to regard the Balkans in quite so complaisant a mood.

The end of the War saw the disintegration of the whole region of Central Europe formerly united under one sceptre in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The dominions of the Dual Monarchy were partitioned among no less than seven different sovereignties. The ailment known as "Balkanitis," instead of being confined to a remote backwash of European civilization, has spread like a cancerous growth throughout the length and breadth of the Danubian basin. The boundaries of the Balkans, speaking in psychological rather than geographical terms, now march with those of Italy and Germany. Indeed, if Switzerland be included—and in an article contributed to the June issue of The North American Review I pointed out how far Balkanizing tendencies had progressed in Switzerland—we may even say that the Balkans border upon France. As thus defined, the Balkans comprise ten states. Six of these—Jugoslavia, Rumania, Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and European Turkey—form the Balkans proper, and the other four—Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Switzerland—are states of the upper Danubian basin that have become Balkanized by the War and its aftermath.

It is widely recognized that this Balkanization of so large a part of Europe sadly complicates the task of maintaining peace. It has erected a well nigh impenetrable network of tariff

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

barriers that strangle the trade of the whole region. It has created hundreds of miles of new frontiers that have to be policed and fortified. It has multiplied the number of danger spots where those "incidents" may occur that lead to war.

What are the underlying factors that predispose a region to this ailment? Balkanitis is a disease likely to afflict any part of the world where there are a number of petty states suffering from economic backwardness and cultural immaturity, lacking a firmly established consciousness of national unity, and bedeviled by an insoluble complex of stubborn little racial groups whose linguistic boundaries are so hopelessly entangled with one another that they can not be made to coincide with any political boundary that could conceivably be devised. In both the Balkans proper and the upper Danubian region, the causes that led to this condition were similar. For hundreds of years the Turkish Sultanate and the Habsburg Monarchy had borne sway over territories containing many diverse national, ethnic and linguistic groups. Each imperial system, by establishing a common sovereignty over the subject nationalities, had obliterated their traditional boundaries. During the centuries that elapsed there were continual migrations of population within each empire. One group would gradually and almost imperceptibly infiltrate into the region inhabited by another. But unhappily, though the various groups became inextricably interwoven geographically, they continued to maintain a rigorous exclusiveness linguistically, culturally and socially. With the spread of nationalistic sentiment in the Nineteenth Century, the subject peoples became conscious of their individuality and demanded their liberty. Under the pressure of nationalistic uprisings, the Turkish Empire crumbled brick by brick over a period of a century. The Habsburg Empire managed to hold together until the end of the War, but in 1918, like the one-hoss shay, it went to pieces all at once. When the subject nationalities of these two empires gained their independence and sought to go their separate ways, they could not agree where the boundary lines between them should be drawn. Those who had overflowed their original limits naturally wanted to incorporate into their new states all the territories in which they now had or claimed a majority; those whose ancient territories had suffered encroachments insisted upon restoring the historic frontiers of five hundred or a thousand years ago, regardless of present conditions.

Differences of this kind always make for trouble. The tragedy of the situation is that no matter where the boundary line is drawn, there will always be a disaffected group yearning to move the frontier a few miles in this direction or that so that they can belong to the country they regard as their own. And despite the excessive number of petty states already in existence, there are still unhappy minorities like the Macedonians and the Croats clamoring for independent states of their own. It is out of such a complex of thwarted aspirations that wars are born.

II

It would not be so tragic if it were possible to insulate the Balkan region and to localize the wars that inevitably flare up out of this seething broth of humanity. Then the rest of the world could cry "A plague o' both your houses!" and forget about it. But un-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fortunately the rival ambitions of the great powers bordering on the Balkans, who see in the turmoil only an opportunity to extend their influence and sometimes their territory, have prevented the successful consummation of a policy which could be put into effect only by the voluntary coöperation of all concerned. And so the old game continues its dreary round. Some great power takes under its wing a bloc of two or three states. At once their neighbors are alarmed. They hasten to place themselves under the protection of some other great power, which is only too glad to assume the rôle. Rival systems of alliances are built up. There is a long period of increasing tension and a sudden crisis. After a frantic scurrying to and fro of diplomats, a disaster is averted, or at any rate the ensuing war is successfully localized. Peace is eventually restored. Then comes another period of increasing tension. The sequence is repeated again and again. Sooner or later there is sure to be a slip. Two great powers, which may have no direct quarrel with each other, find themselves locked in a life and death struggle in order to "defend" the rights of their little protégés. Each big power has its friends and allies and drags them in after it. A world war is on.

The cardinal importance of the Balkan question may perhaps be better appreciated when we recall that almost every European war of the last sixty years has originated in the Balkans. The list is worth repeating: the Russo-Turkish War (1877–78); the first Greco-Turkish War (1897); the Italo-Turkish War (1911–12); the first Balkan War (1912–13); the second Balkan War (1913); the Great War (1914–18); and the second Greco-Turkish War (1921–22). It is true that only one of these seven conflicts turned out to be a world calamity, but most people feel that it was one too many.

The game of the great powers which are busily engaged in building up blocs and maneuvering against each other in the Balkans has been in full swing ever since the end of the War, and it now seems to be approaching a major crisis. As the chances are nine out of ten that the next European war will start somewhere in the Balkans, it may be worth while to review the events that are leading up to a climax that may have momentous consequences.

The three great powers that are today fishing in the troubled waters of the Balkans are France, Italy and Germany. France got in on the ground floor right after the War. Her most brilliant coup was the formation of the Little Entente, consisting of Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Jugoslavia. These nations had all profited enormously at the expense of the defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire; and they therefore had a common interest in keeping the rumps of Austria and Hungary weak, and in seeing that they did not become too friendly with each other or with Germany. This fitted in nicely with France's project of establishing a *cordon sanitaire* around Germany. For years France was without a rival to challenge her hegemony in the Balkan and Danubian regions.

For a decade and a half Germany and Italy were unsuccessful in their attempts to make inroads upon the French position. Germany, of course, was fast bound by the peace treaties. Her attempts at penetration, which invariably took the form of seeking an *Anschluss* or political union with Austria, were consistently balked by France and the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Little Entente. In 1919, Austrian sentiment showed itself to be very definitely in favor of *Anschluss,* but the project was specifically forbidden by the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain. Again in 1931, Germany and Austria negotiated an agreement to establish a customs union between them, but they were obliged to back down. In 1933, Adolf Hitler, himself an Austrian by birth, became Chancellor of the German Reich. The campaign for *Anschluss* was resumed with redoubled vigor. But to his discomfiture, the German dictator found himself faced by a far more resourceful rival. Austria became the scene of a head-on collision between Hitler and Mussolini.

III

Italy had regarded France's hegemony in Central Europe with ill-concealed jealousy. For a long time Italy was unable to make any headway with either of the two main groups—victors and vanquished—into which these nations were divided. From Austria Italy had taken South Tyrol and other territories, and this fact, combined with the bitter memories of a traditional enmity and a recent war, for many years precluded the possibility of any *rapprochement.* At the same time Italy, though one of the victor powers, was unable either to share or to challenge French influence over the Little Entente because of her bitter quarrel with Jugoslavia over the distribution of the spoils taken from Austria. Both countries had claimed Trieste, Fiume and Dalmatia. In the secret London Pact of 1915, Trieste and Dalmatia had been promised to Italy by Great Britain and France as her reward for joining them in the War against the Central Powers; and Italy subsequently laid claim to Fiume as well.

These demands were in keeping with Italy's long-standing ambition to turn the Adriatic Sea into an Italian lake by securing control of the coast line opposite Italy. The Dalmatian coast possesses a vast number of inlets, harbors and islands, which form a network of ideal submarine nests, while the Italian shore facing it is almost devoid of natural harbors. In consonance with her design, Italy had already before the War spread her tentacles into Montenegro and Albania, which form the continuation of the Dalmatian coast southward.

At the Peace Conference, however, President Wilson vigorously supported Jugoslavia's claim to Fiume and Dalmatia. Hot tempers were further exacerbated when the fiery D'Annunzio, at the head of a private army of adventurers, seized Fiume in September, 1919. Although his action was disavowed by the Italian Government, Italy and Jugoslavia on several occasions seemed to be on the verge of war. Late in 1920, when it became evident that President Wilson was about to fade from the international scene, Jugoslavia expressed a willingness to compromise. Accordingly, the two countries signed the Treaty of Rapallo in November, 1920. By this settlement, Trieste went to Italy and Fiume became a free city. Dalmatia was allotted to Jugoslavia with the exception of the seaport of Zara. In virtue of its predominantly Italian population, this town was successfully claimed by Italy, who thereby assured herself of a foothold on the Jugoslav coast.

Despite the concessions made to her demands, this settlement was regarded by the more extreme Italian national-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ists led by the Fascisti as a diplomatic defeat. Italy was to meet still another setback at the hands of Jugoslavia. Italian relations with Montenegro had become peculiarly intimate in 1896 through the marriage of King Victor Emmanuel (then Crown Prince) with Princess Elena, daughter of King Nicholas of Montenegro. The high hopes kindled thereby were destined to suffer grievous disappointment at the close of the War, when the Montenegrins, to Italy's great disgust, voted for union with Jugoslavia, and King Victor Emmanuel found himself saddled with the duty of extending hospitality to an unemployed father-in-law.

In Albania, too, things did not go so well. Italy had proclaimed a protectorate over that country in 1917, but the declaration was subsequently retracted in the face of combined Albanian and Allied opposition.

IV

Such was the situation when Benito Mussolini took the reins in 1922. The Fascisti bitterly castigated the politicians of preceding Italian régimes, whom they branded as *rinunciatari*, for having neglected Italy's interests when the decisive steps were being taken in the peace settlement. Mussolini immediately set about remedying the situation in his characteristically energetic fashion. In 1924 he compelled Jugoslavia to agree to a revision of the Treaty of Rapallo whereby Fiume was annexed to Italy. In 1926 he negotiated the Treaty of Tirana, a pact of mutual support and coöperation, with Ahmed Zogu, the Mohammedan President of Albania. This caused a hostile reaction in Jugoslavia, and for a time diplomatic relations between that country and Albania were severed. Albania retaliated by signing a defensive alliance with Italy in 1927. In the following year Ahmed Zogu, assured of Mussolini's support, proclaimed himself King of the Albanians.

Looking farther afield, Mussolini next established close relations with Bulgaria. As one of the vanquished nations, and one which had suffered a loss of territory to both Jugoslavia and Rumania, her feelings for the Little Entente were far from cordial. She proved receptive to Italian influence, which was further cemented in 1930 through the marriage of Princess Joanna of Savoy, daughter of the King of Italy, with King Boris of Bulgaria.

So far, however, Mussolini had not scored any very startling coup. Albania and Bulgaria, with a combined population of only seven million, were but a paltry counterweight to the three members of the Little Entente, which boasted an aggregate population more than six times as great. Any alignment that was seriously to rival the Little Entente required the adhesion of Austria and Hungary, and this was long out of the question. Austria, in fact, looked to Germany to back up her claims against Italy. As late as 1926 there were bitter verbal clashes between Italy and the two Teutonic powers. German politicians and newspapers made vigorous protests backing up Austria's complaints against the harsh methods Mussolini was using to Italianize the German inhabitants of South Tyrol—or Upper Adige, as the Italians have rechristened it. Some even went so far as to advocate a boycott of Italy. It was in reply to this agitation that Mussolini gave utterance to his famous invective against Germany. "We are sufficiently insolent and explicit," he cried, "to substitute a new formula for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an old one, namely, this one: we exact the payment of two eyes for the loss of only one eye and of a whole set of teeth for the loss of only one tooth!"

Later, however, relations with Germany were somewhat improved when Mussolini began his policy of pin-pricking France by harping upon the necessity of conceding Germany the right to rearm on a basis of equality with other nations. In the early part of 1933, when Adolf Hitler seized power in Germany, there was much grandiose talk of the impending formation of a Fascist International by Germany and Italy. An alliance with Italy had long been a cardinal aim of Hitler's foreign policy. To facilitate the attainment of this end, the Nazi spellbinders had received orders to forget all about the wrongs of South Tyrol. Mussolini welcomed Hitler's advances. He was flattered by the success of one who had undisguisedly imitated his methods, and gratified by Hitler's complaisance on the South Tyrol question. Rumors were bruited abroad that the two dictators were contemplating a joint hegemony of the European Continent that would throw France and Russia into the shade.

All these hopes were rudely shattered when Mussolini discovered that Hitler was willing to renounce South Tyrol only as the price of securing Italy's consent to Austro-German union. To this plan Mussolini is unalterably opposed. From the Italian point of view, the greatest benefit of the War had been the destruction of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Italy's hereditary oppressor and foe, whose population of fifty million had overhung Italy's Alpine frontier like a vast glacier that might at any time melt into an overwhelming flood. Italy had entered the War in order to remove that menace, and had succeeded. Would she now be content to see, through the union of Austria and Germany, the Habsburg Monarchy replaced as her neighbor by a still greater German Reich of seventy-three million people—nearly double Italy's population? Hitler might promise to forego South Tyrol today; but after he had effected his union with Austria, what then? How long would he abide by his pledge? Moreover, would not the augmented German Reich, finding itself removed by only fifty miles from access to the Adriatic, begin to hunger for the return of some former Austrian territory in order to have a corridor to the sea at Trieste, just as Poland had obtained a corridor to the Baltic at Germany's expense? No, the *Anschluss* project was unthinkable, and Mussolini soon made that clear. In the early part of 1934, when the Nazi threat to Austria's independence loomed largest, it was even rumored that orders had gone forth to prepare the Italian army for action in the event that Hitler should seek to engineer a *coup d'état* in Austria. Fortunately for Mussolini, the Austrian reaction to Hitler's dictatorial methods played right into his hands.

V

The Fates, or Norns, or whoever they be that prescribe the actions of men, must have a strange liking for irony. Only so would they have ordained that the accession of a son of Austria to the supreme rulership of Germany should have been the decisive factor in turning the sentiment of Austrians against the thought of union with their blood brothers in Germany. Only so would they have decreed that Italy, after having done her utmost to push the Austro-Hungarian Humpty Dumpty off the wall, should have feverishly begun to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

marshal all the king's men and all the king's horses, or rather their equivalent in the person of *Il Duce*, in a desperate effort to put the pieces together again. Yes, indeed, the world is out of joint; but it probably never occurs to Mussolini and Hitler to ask themselves whether they were really born to set it right.

Hitler's proscription of the Social Democratic party and his brusque treatment of the Roman Catholics estranged the sympathy of the corresponding groups in Austria. The Austrian Socialists, who had been among the foremost advocates of *Anschluss*, were completely alienated. The Roman Catholics, who had never been more than lukewarm at the notion of union with a predominantly Protestant country, went into active opposition and became the backbone of Chancellor Dollfuss's Fatherland Front, which derives its eclectic inspiration partly from Roman Catholic Clericalism, partly from Italian Fascism, and partly from a revival of Habsburg monarchist sentiment. Only the Austrian Nazis, representing a third or more of the population, remained loyal to the *Anschluss* idea. The Austrian Government, fighting for its very existence against the Nazis, naturally followed Hitler's example in sinking the South Tyrol question in order to win Mussolini's support.

By the middle of 1933, Austria had become the battleground for the three great powers interested in furthering their influence in the Danubian region. Germany suborned the Austrian Nazis to engage in a fanatical and often violent agitation; Italy subsidized Dollfuss; and France lent her moral support to the Socialists—of course not because of any love for the tenets of Marxism, but simply because the Socialists were fighting to keep both Hitler and Mussolini out of Austria, and this coincided with French policy.

Step by step, Mussolini began to squeeze his two rivals out of Austria. The Austrian Nazi party had already been suppressed in June, 1933, and the Italian dictator now egged on Dollfuss to proscribe the Socialists. French diplomatic pressure, discreetly applied, kept the Socialists safe for several months. However, on February 6, 1934, bloody riots broke out in Paris, plunging France into a grave internal crisis of so acute a character that some observers predicted it would end in revolution. For several days the French Government was too preoccupied with domestic troubles to pay much attention to foreign affairs. On February 12, by a strange coincidence, the Austrian Government launched an attack on the Socialists, and, after a sanguinary battle of several days' duration, succeeded in suppressing and destroying the party. Mussolini's first objective, that of breaking up the forces that might become centres of German or French influence in Austria, had been attained.

Mussolini's next step was to win over Hungary to the bloc he was seeking to build up in Central Europe by encouraging her to enter into closer relations with Austria. There was, of course, the long tradition of Hungary's intimate association with Austria as the junior partner in the Habsburg Dual Monarchy. This connection had been rudely broken in the revolutionary upheavals of 1918. The action of the Allied powers in transferring Burgenland Province from Hungary to Austria on the ground that it had a German majority had sown the seeds of discord between the two countries. Although this loss was but a trifle compared with the other territories

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which Hungary had been compelled to cede to the Little Entente powers, it served for many years the useful purpose of keeping Hungary and Austria from uniting against their rivals—a result probably not unanticipated by the Allies when the transfer was decreed.

Hungary's foreign policy is dominated by a single idea which can be summed up in one word—revisionism. She is willing to ally herself with any power that will help her to effect a revision of the Treaty of Trianon and a return of at least part of her lost provinces. The agitation of Germany and Italy for revision was watched by Hungary with eager expectation. General Gömbös, the Hungarian Prime Minister, made a point of keeping on good terms with both Mussolini and Hitler. He was somewhat disconcerted when signs of coolness between the two great men made themselves manifest and he found it necessary to choose either one or the other. Mussolini's success in outwitting Hitler in Austria and the petty annoyance caused by Nazi agitation amongst the German minority in Hungary decided Gömbös to throw in his lot with Mussolini.

VI

The organization of the Austro-Hungarian bloc under Italian tutelage assumed formal shape when Dr. Dollfuss and General Gömbös foregathered with Signor Mussolini at Rome on March 17 and drew up three treaties—one political and one economic protocol signed by all three parties, and one economic protocol applying to Austria and Italy only.

The political protocol pledged the three powers "to agree among themselves on all problems which particularly interest them and on those of a general nature in order to pursue . . . a common policy directed to promote effective collaboration among European States, particularly among Italy, Austria and Hungary. For this purpose the three governments will proceed to common consultation whenever any one of them considers it desirable."

The economic protocols were designed by Mussolini for the purpose of attaching his two clients to him by giving them the trade outlets they so badly need and have not heretofore been able to obtain anywhere else. They established general principles of coöperation which were worked out in detail by eight supplementary interlocking accords signed on May 14. The salient provisions of these economic accords may be summarized as follows: Italy and Austria contracted to purchase a specified quantity of Hungarian wheat at a price above the prevailing market rate; Italy and Hungary agreed to grant lower tariffs to exports of Austrian manufactures; Austria and Hungary promised to use the Italian ports of Trieste and Fiume as far as possible in their foreign trade (a measure calculated to divert traffic from the German port of Hamburg, which is already suffering from the depression and the Jewish boycott); and all three countries pledged themselves to promote trade generally among themselves by a system of reciprocal tariff concessions.

Although the protocols were significant of the trend of Italian policy, they were not very startling in their formal content. Ostensibly, they were directed against no other power; indeed, the pious hope was even voiced that Germany, the Little Entente and any other countries that were so inclined would see their way clear to adhere to the pacts. But the spirit underlying the agreements was revealed quite frankly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by Mussolini in an address delivered on March 18—the day after the signing of the protocols—before the Quinquennial Assembly of the Fascist Party. Mussolini made it clear that it was Italy's policy to prevent Austria's absorption by Germany and to support Hungary's claims to treaty revision at the expense of the Little Entente. "Austria may be assured she can count on Italy at all times," he declared. "No effort will be spared by Italy to assist her. . . . Hungary has asked for justice and for the fulfilment of promises that had been made to her. She has been terribly mutilated and millions of her people live in foreign lands. Italy has supported and will continue to support Hungarian aspirations. Hungary deserves and will have a better place than has been reserved for her hitherto." This speech, taken in conjunction with General Gömbös's subsequent statement that Hungary could not enter into political compacts with any country that did not admit Hungary's right to treaty revision, made it patent that Mussolini's bloc was actively directed against the Little Entente, and, in the sense that it was intended to serve as a buffer against any extension of Nazi influence in Austria, against Germany as well. In Jugoslav circles especially the reaction was one of alarm, for they suspect that Mussolini's ardent championship of the claims of Hungary is simply a pretext for furthering his own design of acquiring Dalmatia for Italy.

VII

As the situation now stands, therefore, we see most of the nations of the Danubian and Balkan regions arrayed against each other in two rival blocs, each under the patronage of a great power. Under France's tutelage are the three states of the Little Entente, with a combined population of forty-seven million. Under Italy's protection is a four-power bloc composed of Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria and Albania, with a total population of twenty-three million.

So far Germany has been unsuccessful in building up a bloc of her own. General Göring, the Prime Minister of Prussia, made a good will tour of the Balkans on behalf of the German Government in the latter part of May, in the course of which he visited Jugoslavia, Greece and Hungary; but he apparently brought home no bacon. His original itinerary included Rumania, but this country was omitted when her Government intimated that a visit from Göring would prove embarrassing.

The establishment of Mussolini's influence over Austria and Hungary at one blow deprived Germany of her two most logical allies. Mussolini's coup, coming almost simultaneously with Soviet Russia's *rapprochement* with France, reminded Hitler that he was treading upon ground that still shivered with the reverberations of 1914. Germany lost the last war because Italy, after weighing the bribes that both sides were willing to offer her, threw in her lot with the Allies instead of the Central Powers, thus completing the iron ring that France and Russia had forged to hem Germany in. If Hitler were to persist in his designs upon Austria, he would be likely to make Mussolini's fear of Germany outweigh his jealousy of France. Should Italy join a Franco-Russian bloc aimed at Germany, the eagle of Prussia would be caged before she had a chance to try out the new pair of wings with which Hitler has equipped her. All his dreams of world power would come to naught. It is ob-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vious that he would be prepared to pay almost any price to avert such a diplomatic disaster and to keep Mussolini favorable to the notion of German military equality. So he decided to follow the example of that German King of nine centuries ago who, when excommunicated and threatened with deposition by an inexorable Italian Pope, made the journey to Canossa to pay the price of his reinstatement into grace. On June 14, 1934, the German Chancellor, using a somewhat more modern means of transportation than his predecessor, flew by airplane to Venice to win the favor of an Italian dictator who has inherited the mantle of authority worn of old by the popes. Pope Benito did not make King Adolf wait barefoot in the snow for three days, but he demanded his price and Hitler paid it. Hitler renounced his most cherished ambition—to unite the land of his birth with the land of his adoption. Beneath the smiling countenance with which he greeted Mussolini, his resentment must have been bitter—all the more bitter because he dared not display it openly. His heart can not but deny the pledge framed by his lips—and Mussolini must be shrewd enough to sense that in the long run it is a man's heart that determines his actions, and not his lips. Should the opportunity ever present itself to Hitler to renege on his pledge with safety—but such conjectures belong to the future.

It is not at present possible to assess all the consequences of Hitler's *rapprochement* with Mussolini. It opens a new chapter—and needless to say, an ominous one as usual—in the extremely involved network of intrigue that has fouled all the diplomatic fishing-lines of Europe ever since Hitler strode upon the scene. Even Mussolini does not seem to be overconfident of the outcome; as he stood, side by side with Hitler, on a Venetian balcony, he explained to the throng of Italians gathered below the significance of the historic meeting; and with a quotation from his speech we may fittingly close.

"Let it be said again," he shouted, "Europe is faced by a terrible alternative. Either she can achieve a minimum of political understanding, of economic collaboration, of social comprehension, or her doom is irrevocably sealed!"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Louisa, Lady Whitney

By André Maurois

A Story

Whenever I go to England for any length of time, I make it a point to spend a week-end with my friends the Parkers, who live in Wiltshire. It isn't easy for a Frenchman to understand how pleasant and self-contained life can be in the rural districts of England. Wiltshire is such a lovely place, all sand-hills and chalk-cliffs and grass and gardens, and the nicest little country-houses, and the nicest people, retired army officers and farmers who don't have to farm, and diplomats who aren't on parade. They read a little, and they ride a little, and they visit the antique-shops of Bath, and they grow flowers. Such things occupy them; they smile at those who lead fuller and more foolish lives. My friends the Parkers are only two hours' train-ride from London; they've never been there since the Armistice. That's not easy to believe, is it?

What is it that makes their days so peaceful and so happy? Well, I think that it's a sense of beauty. The Parkers, for instance, collect a sort of dull, greenish-blue glass, Waterford glass, I think it is; they buy landscapes, or new bits of old furniture; they restore a panel in the wainscot. And all their friends are just like them. They'll call upon each other to admire some fresh acquisition, some novel arrangement of the old, a walk that's just been flagged or tiled, a curtain, a drapery that's new. They're weighty judges, though they're kind; they can tell that a few inches of lead molding have restored a window to its old perfection. Gravely they nod, and approve, and even the stranger is as breathless as his hosts, and as relieved. Throughout all Wiltshire the good news spreads: "Reggie has completed his library; it's just right. . . . Mrs. Parker has finished the embroidery for her sofa-cushions. The colors are an awfully good match." To me, their seriousness, their preoccupation with pleasant trifles is rather delightful, after the melodramatic ardors I'm used to at home.

One morning, at breakfast, Mrs. Parker said something about a Ted Grove, who'd be dropping in that afternoon.

"Really?" said Colonel Parker. "I'm glad of that. Nice chap, Grove," he said, to me. "You'll find him interesting."

Now I've known the Colonel for a long time, and the worst way to get a story out of him is to ask him questions. So I nodded. After lunch, I had a letter to write, and when I rejoined my hosts upon the lawn, there was a fine hearty

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

old gentleman talking to them. His gay, youthful eyes and his fresh color mocked the snowy whiteness of his hair. It's often so, with elderly Englishmen; youth never seems quite to leave them. I thought him about sixty, and was astonished later to learn that he was close to seventy-five. "Sir Edward Grove, our neighbor," Mrs. Parker said, and we shook hands, and then the conversation I had interrupted was resumed. It seemed they'd been discussing the method of cutting boxwood hedge during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

Mrs. Parker belongs to a species which in England is numerous and exuberant. She is a gardener. She knows the Latin names of flowers, and their ways, and how much sun is good for them. No one is more skilful in planning borders of bright blossoms, so that from spring to autumn a path may have the colors of a Chinese rug, vivid, and fading, and yet of a pattern always. When she walks in a garden, she looks about with the shrewd eyes of a doctor entering a sick-room, or a captain making a barracks-inspection, and alert for errors. Throughout Wiltshire, she's the acknowledged authority on roses. People write to her anxiously, and she replies, and she spends many a morning in such correspondence. An open seed-catalogue is beside her, and she flutters its pages and wrinkles her brows seeking to judge what sort of design, what flowery cluster will at once express the personality of her friends and at the same time suit them best.

Having finished with boxwood, they continued with peonies, and then with tulips, and were about to go into the matter of flower-borders. Meanwhile, I was doing my best to show an intelligent interest in these horticultural matters. Sir Edward Grove, doubtless satisfied at least of my good intentions, said to Mrs. Parker. "Do you think he'd care to see Lady Whitney's garden?"

"I'm sure he should," she said.

"Good! You'll be over a little later, then. Look here—if you'll excuse me, suppose I run along, then, and let her know you're coming. You see, of course—none of us are as young as we were—the least little surprise puts her off, a little."

"Of course," said Mrs. Parker, and smiled at him.

We accompanied him across the fields to a little gate which opened on a golf course. "Cheerio!" he said. "Twenty minutes or thereabouts? Cheerio!" And we watched him swing away with fine long strides, his white head bare to the sun.

"We'll give him a few minutes, shall we?" said Mrs. Parker. We went back through the fields to a bench on the lawn. "I think perhaps I'd better explain—Lady Whitney—to you," she said, and looked at her husband.

"That's a long story," said the Colonel. "Hardly have time."

"Well, you'll help me—Lady Whitney is ninety years old. . . ."

I murmured something. It doesn't matter much what one murmurs, in such circumstances, if the lady has decided she's going to tell you something.

This is what she told me, as we sat there on the lawn.

II

"Can you imagine, a woman who was born the year of the coronation of Queen Victoria—Louisa Cooper, she was, good County family, and all that. There were three girls, all quite beautiful, but Louisa was the loveliest. Her mother's mother was born in Scotland,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but her own mother was County, too. Well. Some said that Louisa's elder sister, Diana, had the more classic features. Diana was afterwards Duchess of Surrey. It's true that Louisa's nose is a little aquiline, but her eyes are so big and blue, and it's easy to see that she must have had a perfect figure. And when women agree that a woman is beautiful, well, then, so she is. And among all the women of her generation, her reputation as a beauty still survives. From the moment when she was presented, she was the toast of the town.

"London was surprised, and perhaps a little sorry when at nineteen she married Lord Whitney. He was at least fifty, and a widower. The marriage was arranged by her father, who was—well, like quite a lot of County fathers. Doubtless he considered it a brilliant match. The Whitneys were the very best people in the County, and they were tremendously wealthy, too. Many of Louisa's friends (my mother was one of them) had some idea that she would find interests other than her husband, before long. They were wrong, though no woman had more chances. She was awfully attractive to men, always. At the Court, Lady Whitney had a place that was all her own. Queen Victoria was as fond of her as if she'd been her daughter; the Queen had so much maternal affection—she displayed it even toward her parents. And the German Emperor invited Louisa to Compiegne every year, and they used to call her '*Die hubsche Englanderin*'—the nice Englishwoman. In Vienna, which used to be full of raving beauties, they'd turn around in the street to look at her.

"Lord Whitney was a possessive husband. He didn't want her out of his sight, even when he was hunting or fishing. In the shooting-boxes of Scotland, he expected her to come to dinner in jewels and an evening-gown. Oh, in some ways he was good enough to her. He showered her with gifts. She had a taste for paintings and she'd only to admire a picture and he'd get in touch at once with all the art-dealers in the world. There are some splendid Italian primitives hanging in Whitney House. Oh, yes, he gave her everything—everything except freedom, and romance, and the society of nice young men.

"The thing that's so astonishing is that she didn't seem unhappy because of his jealousy, or his exactions, or his —well, stodginess is not too strong a word. I've said that she was partly Scotch. Perhaps that gave her certain religious scruples, or a sort of militant Protestantism. She lived, according to her husband's wishes, in the very centre of the smartest set; she never belonged to it.

"You've heard of Dr. Cummings? He was a clergyman, and rather famous in his day. He was preaching in London concerning the prophecies of the Apocalypse, which he professed to be able to interpret. For example, he announced that the New Jerusalem would come in 1867. Lady Whitney followed his sermons faithfully. They tell that just as other women invite their friends to meet them in their boxes at the opera, she'd ask her friends to share her pew in the little church at Crown Court. You'll remember a passage in the Apocalypse, about a woman. 'All shining with the light of God.' When Dr. Cummings came to that verse, many a man in his congregation must have turned to look at her.

"When she was thirty-five, her hus-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

band had a stroke of apoplexy. It left him a helpless invalid. It's easy to believe that such a woman, having a little more freedom, should be courted by some of the brilliant men of her time. She'd smile at them, and shake her head, and tell them that her husband's condition imposed still greater obligations upon her, and that she meant to devote herself to her children. There were four, and three of them were boys.

"At her home, she'd receive a few friends only, and these the dearest ones. Among them was Mr. Disraeli, who'd call upon her almost every day on leaving Parliament. He wrote to her, as he did to Lady Bradford, letters that were intimate, and fantastic, and full of melancholy.

"When Lord Whitney died, of course every one thought she'd lose no time in getting married again. But that's just what didn't happen. Was she considering that her children might be less happy if she gave them a step-father? Was she encouraged to accept her widowed state by the example or the advice of the Queen? Such things we can't know. The fact is that she rejected some of the most eligible men in England.

"When Lady Whitney wasn't far from forty, her friends began to notice that she was receiving marked attentions from a young lieutenant whose name was Grove, Edward Grove. He was a fine sportsman, a crack shot and a wonderful rider, and everybody seemed to like him. He was fifteen years younger than Louisa, and in those Victorian days, almost any other woman would have been inviting serious criticism. But Lady Whitney was above reproach. One might think, and perhaps many did, that her interest in him was almost maternal. The truth was that they were mad about each other.

"Sir Edward has often told me that, when he received the offer of a post in the Soudan, Lady Whitney implored him to accept it. 'You mustn't stay here,' she said. 'I can't marry you, ever. It wouldn't do for my sons to have a step-father scarcely older than themselves. You yourself would be awfully sorry, in a few years—I'm quite sure I love you; you're sure, too. It's just because I do that I mustn't hold you. This post in the Soudan is one of the most important that could possibly be offered to an officer of your rank, and your years. I'll never forgive you, if you decline it. When you come back again, you'll see. It's just Indian Summer, with me, dear—and it's been so nice. But wait until you see what hardships and responsibilities do to your illusions. A few years from now, we'll be able to look at each other sensibly and calmly, yes, and with affection too. But now, it's best for you to go.'"

Colonel Parker looked at his watch, and smiled.

"And it's best for us to go, too," he said. "We were to give Grove a quarter of an hour; it's twenty minutes since he left, and it will take us that long again. You can tell the rest of it as we go along."

We walked through the fields and out the little gate across the golf course. It was a week-day, and there wasn't a soul to be seen. In the distance, Whitney House nestled among the huge trees like a palace in a fairy tale. The sun was hot above our heads, and we went slowly.

And Mrs. Parker told me a little more, about Louisa, Lady Whitney.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

III

"Jack could tell you better than I can about the military situation in Egypt before Kitchener's victory. However, the details don't matter such a lot, and I'll get all mixed up, if I'm not careful.

"The important thing is this, and no doubt you yourself know all about it: the country west of the Nile and beyond Khartoum was very dangerous. It wasn't well-mapped, and it was full of fanatics and trouble-makers. And, of course, it was a time when all the great European powers were squabbling over the division of Africa like a lot of greedy children. The territory of which I'm speaking was coveted by your country, by our own, and even by Belgium, to whom, if I'm not mistaken, we had ceded a province that never really belonged to us.

"Grove, with a mere handful of men, had orders to occupy a region that was scarcely smaller than Scotland. His task was all the more difficult because it was only semi-official. Mr. Gladstone governed England, then, and Mr. Gladstone was bitterly opposed to imperialism. But a Cabinet isn't necessarily all of the same mind, by any means. There were some of the Ministers who considered it highly important to anticipate a possible French advance which would cut off communication between Egypt and southern Africa (and you'll remember that Marchand business, and it proves how right they were).

"It was one of these imperialistic Ministers who had taken young Grove aside, when he was starting for the Soudan, and told him just what he was expected to do. It was the sort of duty which was certain to be delicate, and Grove's position was bound to be—well—ambiguous. His instructions were verbal, you see, and given privately to him by the Minister in question. And it's quite possible that Lady Whitney knew all about it, beforehand, because of her intimacy with the Queen, and because of her friendship with many of the influential men in both Houses.

"All this may seem a little involved but really it isn't. Grove was being sent to do definite things in the Soudan, under definite orders. But he had nothing in writing, and if he failed, his orders might be repudiated.

"Of course, our method during the Nineteenth Century was frequently just that. It's cruel, yes, in a way; it's hard on the individual. The Government would send men into danger for the sake of new provinces or new dominions. If they succeeded, very well; they'd be rewarded for their daring and the territory they had seized would be formally annexed. But if they'd fail, or if the Continental powers made too much fuss, then they'd be disclaimed, discredited, abandoned. It's to our honor that we've always had men ready to play a game as rough as this.

"So young Captain Grove was doing what Francis Drake had done, and what Chinese Gordon was to die doing, later on. You see?

"A year went by, and two years.

"At first, Lady Whitney would hear from Grove week by week. Then, as he was advancing into the wilder regions, his letters became less frequent. . . .

"One day, the *Times* published a little article some ten lines long, stating that the company commanded by Captain Grove had fallen into an ambush near Tawaihna, that Lieutenant Winkler and four men had been killed,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and that the survivors had taken refuge in the little village of Fogo. They had fortified this place as best they could, and were withstanding siege by a rebel native tribe, the Zobeir. This intelligence was brought in to Khartoum by a soldier disguised as a native, and Grove's dispatch was to the effect that there was food and ammunition to last two months. But the dispatch was already three weeks old. The situation of Grove and his men seemed to be critical indeed.

"Now, you'll remember what I was saying before about the Cabinet. Mr. Gladstone hated the idea of foreign conquest, and he spoke of these fanatical Soudanese as if they were some of his pram-pushing constituents. However, there were also Ministers who were more imperialistic than Beaconsfield had ever been.

"One of them had given Grove his instructions. I won't name him; suppose we call him Wilkinson. To him, young Grove was only another pawn to be pushed forward more or less cynically across the African chessboard. If things didn't go as well as they might, well, there'd be other young men to send. Still, Wilkinson did speak before the Cabinet of the urgency of Grove's case, and asked them to send a relief expedition. But Mr. Gladstone slapped the table with the big hand that cut down trees at Hawarden, and declared flatly that he wouldn't send even a corporal's guard against the honest citizens of the Soudan who had done nothing but defend themselves. So Wilkinson knew that the game was up for Grove and his aides.

"But the unfortunate thing for Minister Wilkinson was that a woman had read that little article in the *Times*, a woman well-informed concerning the affairs of state, and one who knew what fate was theirs who fell into the hands of the Dervishes.

"I don't know if you can quite understand how hard it was, how dangerous for her reputation, in those Victorian days, for Lady Whitney to take a hand in this. This young man's name had already been whispered in connection with hers. She knew that.

"With you French, it's so different. It's rare, in France, that a mere sentimental adventure can ruin a political career. With us, even today, in the post-War time when one dares to write anything, to say anything, and to do a little more than one will write or say, I doubt whether a public man could survive a scandal. Imagine what it was like in Queen Victoria's time. Think of Dilke, think of Parnell. As for the woman in the case, it was still worse for her. I don't believe that the Victorians were any better than we are. But they were careful of appearances, and if they were caught, woe betide them!

"You see what it was Lady Whitney was risking—the favor of the Queen, of the Court, of her children. She shrugged, and made her decision.

"Wilkinson was delighted to give her an audience.

"No one knows exactly what took place at that interview. Imagine the scene—the Minister cold, polite, a seasoned diplomat; Lady Whitney, outwardly sedate and calm, and only the flash of her big blue eyes to show that she was fighting for her lover.

"I'm not quite sure that Grove himself knows exactly what was said. There they were, Wilkinson and this beautiful woman measuring swords, keeping their veil of politeness, of good manners. She knew a great many state se-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crets, that is sure, and one of the most influential editors in London was her friend. Perhaps she threatened Wilkinson—but no: a great lady never threatens. What she may have said to him is: Mr. Wilkinson, I know this, I know that; there was this conversation, at Whitney House; there was this letter, this memorandum, which was shown to me. . . .

"Then doubtless Wilkinson, who was an orator, painted a picture of public scandal and its consequences, as she listened, grave and detached and untrembling. Her decision was made; nothing he could say would change it. Either Wilkinson would move heaven and earth to save Grove's life—or else—or else many a reputation would topple in the dust. . . ."

IV

"It ought to be said," interrupted Colonel Parker, "that this—uh—this Wilkinson wasn't really opposed to her idea. Grove was his man, you know, and he'd already done what he could for him. No doubt, while he was talking to Lady Whitney, he was wondering whether the fact that she was interested in Grove wasn't enough to make him reopen the matter. She was a very powerful woman, you know. And it's like a woman to imagine a lot of melodrama, and all that. Of course, it's true that she did go to Wilkinson."

"She went to him, and that night Wilkinson went to Gladstone. That's so, isn't it, Jack? He went, and threatened him with a noisy resignation and a statement to the newspapers, if orders weren't sent to Cairo immediately to send an expedition after Grove. It was a time when the parties were nicely balanced, and a resignation might make a whole new election necessary. . . . I shouldn't insinuate all this, perhaps. . . . However, a few days later, a number of little gun-boats left Khartoum. There were various consequences of this, but one of them was the rescue of Grove's company.

"He returned to London a hero. Wilkinson was a good sportsman; he saw to it that Grove got the D.S.O.—a decoration that's rare enough for a Captain of thirty. Society speculated as to which of that year's débutantes would catch the dashing young officer. The young girls made quite a lion of him. The War Office and the Viceroy wrangled over him—he became—but there he is, look, opening the little gate by the orchard. . . ."

"Can't you tell me what happened? Did he marry? Or was he faithful to Lady Whitney?"

"He's been faithful to her for forty-five years, although she's never consented to marry him."

I'd have liked to ask another question, but Sir Edward Grove might have overheard.

"Well!" he said. "I suppose it was Parker who delayed you . . . . Lady Whitney's waiting for you, in the park. He turned to me. "Wait till you see how lovely she is," he said.

The young enthusiasm in his voice was touching; he had the proud and bashful air of one who presents his fiancée to his friends. Mrs. Parker looked at me and smiled.

We went in at the little gate and walked slowly up a path fringed with linden-trees. There we met a lady, tall and slim and straight and gracious, who was wearing one of those big straw hats one sees in Winterhalter's pictures, and leaning on a cane so tall it might have been a shepherd's crook. Her black dress was relieved by a little

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWARK, OHIO

pattern of white flowers. She walked slowly, and with dignity and grace. No one could ever fail to notice her, or to admire her. Her voice was clear and sweet, and had no feebleness. Learning that I was French, she began to speak of the Emperor Napoleon III, and of Gallifet, whom she knew well, and then of William II.

"He was an awfully bad little boy," she said. "How he used to annoy poor dear King Edward."

"You knew King Edward, Madame?" I said.

"Well, I taught him to dance," she said. "He was quite diligent. He'd count out loud: one, two, three, one, two, three."

"Here's the tree I was telling you about," said General Grove. The Parkers went forward a pace or two with him.

"You've been talking to Ted?" said Lady Whitney. "Isn't he clever? Ah! There aren't any men like him, nowadays."

In her turn, she'd spoken these words with an enthusiasm quite fresh and youthful. Beneath the fringe of her white hair, her beauty still was blazing, and her blue eyes were bright, though they seemed to me brave rather than kind.

"Lady Whitney," said Mrs. Parker. "I do think your linden-trees need pruning."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Silver Cart Before the Horse

By H. P. Losely

Congress in its last bit of legislating on money overlooked some exceedingly vital aspects of the silver situation

In the battle of gold against silver for money, I am a neutral, as neutral as the Irishman in 1914—I don't care who licks the depression. For the insignia on my arm is neither golden cross nor silver crescent, but the cogged wheel of interlocking industry. And industry is worn to exasperation with the swashbuckling tactics of the two petty barons under their gold and silver banners, who between them produce for each family in the world less than a paltry ten cents' worth of metal a month, yet arrogantly dictate our financial destinies.

The political silver parade has unfortunately enlisted under its standard much narrowly selfish support. One sees the pennants of insatiable mining communities, of greedy speculators, of dishonest inflationists and even of misguided farmers. The propaganda became so clamorous that Neil Carothers sarcastically suggested, as a measure of national economy, that all the silver lobbyists be gathered in a corner and bought off with a lump sum; the words "and then drowned" were missing, but the venom was there. Unfortunately, any such recognition of the nuisance value of noise would be a premium on recurrent pandemonium.

Certainly, the Silver Purchase Act of 1934 provides neither a lump-sum lolly-pop, nor a final judgment of the merits of silver for currency. It seems rather an astutely devised measure for testing the market and, so far at least, the market itself reflects the opinion that its powers will be used with elaborate caution. So much so that we are likely to hear silver-tongued orations for months to come. Like a dethroned monarch, the white metal has its adherents who conspire to restore it to its "rightful place" and gain by the restoration.

Yet in spite of all the false claims made, it would be of immense benefit to the world, and especially to the relations between East and West, if the long-debated position of silver could be convincingly settled. As any arbitrator knows, no dispute is ever peaceably and permanently settled without considering the merits of any and all claims, even when the claimants advance meretricious arguments along with meritorious ones. We might make more progress by adopting that attitude, and in searching for a reasonable and acceptable solution of the silver question might find some important factors hitherto overlooked.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

II

It will presently be evident that my conclusions are in favor of placing some of the monetary load on silver —making silver do something for us, rather than "doing something for silver." But lest I be suspected of heretical doctrine, let me at once restate, in a way that can be easily grasped, the simple facts which make gold the superior medium of international exchange.

Gold attained its place by intrinsic merit. Its high value was achieved by virtue of an insistent demand for it for a wide-spread use in the arts, by bookbinder and dentist, by pen-maker and jeweler. That exceedingly clever protagonist of British interests, John Maynard Keynes, only two years ago was calling gold a worthless rascal and barbarous relic; somehow one felt reminded of the old fable of Maître Reynard who wanted grapes but discoursed on the dangers of stomachache. Yet no intricacies of calculus are needed for the plain demonstration that in 1931, long before we went off our old standard, monetary demand for gold had added only about twenty per cent to the value of the metal. The normal demand for gold as a commodity can only be satisfied by working some of the high-cost mines.

It was the high real value of gold, together with its availability in reasonably sufficient quantity, its quality of permanence and its adaptability to coinage, that made it the most suitable *tangible* medium for settling payments —and it still retains that position.

Gold has a decided margin of superiority over silver in that respect. That is evidenced by the comparative shipping charges; for example, Anglo-American shipping cost is only one-fourth cent per dollar for gold, but three-fourths cent for silver; storage and trucking costs are even more favorable to gold. That may seem a small margin, but it is just by such small competitive advantages that commercial supremacy is gained or lost. It is because of that one-half per cent economy in moving balances that gold displaced silver in international business, and for the undisturbed transaction of that business there is no better available mechanism than a money unit of fixed gold content.

Now it has been widely asserted that we can not have a dollar of fixed gold content and also of constant purchasing power. That is an error perpetuated by repetition *ad nauseam*. People looking for a scapegoat were all too easily convinced that a shortage of gold was at the root of our troubles. The fact is that we can have a gold dollar of fixed weight and constant value, providing we are willing to take the necessary measures to balance supply and demand for the metal at a given cost level. And since the whole magnitude of the gold mining business is in the order of twenty-five cents a year per caput, or about one part in three thousand of our national productivity, we could well afford to concede some "new deal" method of dealing with it, so as to stabilize the value of gold. About two years ago, I suggested in the REVIEW graduated excise taxes on gold used in the arts as one necessary step in the management of the demand for the metal.

However, it is not incompatible with adherence to the ideal of a fixed gold standard to admit that monetary demand for the metal may at times become devastating, and that a relief

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

valve might help to keep the pressure below the danger point. Some four years ago the late Harrington Emerson pointed out that, with the exception of our money-standard metal, every commercial commodity has one or more alternates. If there is a short wheat crop, we can make bread out of rye, or even potatoes. Every coal dealer now knows that oil is also a fuel. Wool is preëminent for warm clothing, but we have not quite abandoned furs and skins, and have even added artificial leather.

It is only in our management of money standards that we have granted a monopoly to a single commodity, and so placed our price system at the mercy of geological accident, as well as financing accidents. In the final analysis, the real case for silver as an auxiliary medium rests on a statistically demonstrable basis—as a help to manage the demand for gold and keep that demand within the available area of supply at a stable cost. Even under normal conditions, it is likely in the proximate future that the secular growth of demand for gold, left to itself, would drive the cost into a new range of high prices.

III

There was recently an important bridge in Mr. Mellon's bailiwick which needed repairs and adaptation to heavier loads; it was at first thought that the bridge would have to come down and be replaced by a new structure. Had traditional methods been used, that is what would have happened. But in the home of aluminum, some one had the bright idea of reducing the dead-load by taking out some of the heavy steel members which carried the roadbed and replacing them with light alloys. The bridge was so saved and its useful life has been extended for at least another decade.

If we can similarly recognize that the load on the golden bridge which carries our commerce and finance is getting beyond the safety point, we may well follow advanced engineering practice and see if some bold thinking will save it. I do not concede the need for us to await any international agreement on bimetallism; indeed, with the present temper of intense nationalism and disregard for international obligations, one could place little reliance on such a system. What has not been noticed is that our own metallic position in the United States offers a special and peculiar opportunity for a limited domestic bimetallism.

Apart from our ample stock of gold, we rank high enough in our per caput production; even though we only produce one-tenth of the world's new gold, we have only one-fifteenth of the world population and are accustomed to a wide use of paper accounting. Our silver resources are, however, much greater than those of gold, and could be made more valuable to the nation as a whole.

As the essential advantage of gold over silver depends on the low shipping cost of the metal, it is evident that its superiority is of little importance for *domestic* transactions which, under a secure government, can be liquidated by paper accounting, without actual movement of metal. What we do need is *full value* behind the paper. We have at present more gold than we really need and would do well to release some of it in a trade with others who are in greater need of it. Certainly, if some of our money base can be equally well provided by silver as by gold, then our

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

impounding of an excessive part of the world's monetary supply for domestic use is not merely selfish, it is not even intelligently selfish.

Of course, if we had a Utopia, where every one understood money and adhered to principles of strict financial integrity, we could manage all our domestic transactions with paper money correlated to bona-fide commercial operations. The Federal Reserve note, issued only against full value of commodities in transit and retired on completion of the transfer, is perfectly honest money; the additional legal reserve of gold is a safety factor against the occasional failure of the transaction to go through as expected. But a silver certificate for one dollar issued with no more backing than forty-five cents' worth of silver at the market is dishonest money. We should insist at all costs on full value behind paper in circulation.

IV

Suppose that we do wish to use silver to a wider extent for backing currency, without questioning the dominance of gold in the international field as the ultimate standard. What is to prevent our doing so? There is really only one valid reason: the instability of its market value, relative to the standard metal. Can that be remedied, at least within our own boundaries?

Popular opinion, judging by general rules rather than particular circumstances, assumes that the price of silver is simply the result of the much-misunderstood law of supply and demand, so that there is nothing much one can do about it except let nature take its course —the one thing civilization never does, because it never can afford to. Mr. E. L. Bernays, past master in the art of influencing public demand, has a far sounder concept of economic law than some of our professional but stiltedly conventional economists. Demand is no more a fixed quantity than is the size of a penny balloon; it can be puffed up or deflated.

The silver-for-money advocates in Washington have lacked understanding and put their cart before the horse. They want to use silver for money to take it off the market, and so make it ostensibly more valuable. That is a strategic mistake. We had confidence in gold because we knew it could be fed out to the arts and used up. But under our recent management of silver, we have piled up an unmanageable surplus; the lack of confidence as to its future value is the logical and natural result. The very first essential to engender confidence in silver as the basis of money is a manipulation of demand to demonstrate that the silver on hand can actually be used up. That demonstration need not go to the extent of consuming all the supplies, but it must go to the extent of showing that all new silver can be turned into consumption channels. That is simply the elemental common sense of the pawnbroker who declines to lend on unsalable merchandise.

What have we to dispose of in our territory? Our conditions for disposal of silver as a commodity are exceptionally favorable if properly handled. Inasmuch as three-fourths of our new silver is the by-product of lead, zinc and copper mining, our maximum output comes just at the period when the capital-goods industries are flourishing, that is, when general purchasing power is at its highest. Under such peak conditions, we may extract as much as 60,000,000 ounces a year, while under

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

depression conditions, the output may recede below 20,000,000 ounces.

In the prosperous times, when we mine 60,000,000 ounces, it has been estimated that as much as 20,000,000 ounces go to Rochester to be dissolved in nitric acid. Eastman's "you push the button, we do the rest" popularized photography, then Edison added his cinematograph, so that an outlet for silver unknown a century ago now may take a third of our domestic silver output. There are other industrial uses pending, but we do not need to wait for these to provide our outlet. Our congressional silverites need only exercise a little commercial judgment, instead of chasing rainbows. Not long ago there was an excise tax placed on sterling-ware, but no tax levied on plated-ware. The silver States might well inquire whether their representatives were asleep at the switch! A reversal of that arrangement would make it possible to sell well over one ounce per family annually in the form of sterling table-ware, and so dispose of most of the rest of our domestic output. The present consumption of brass for flat-ware is many times that amount; with a well-planned, tax-free marketing of sturdy sterling-ware, Mrs. Consumer would get much more satisfaction and better real value for her money than is possible with plated-ware. In addition, there is a growing consumption of silver for jewelry, which might eventually be further stimulated by excise taxes on gold jewelry.

Under such a management of silver, we would have nothing left of our own current production to use for money. The Treasury would, however, find it very easy to exchange some of its huge hoard of gold for silver and in due course make a profit on the transaction. It could then issue silver certificates in dollar denominations, redeemable at the market price for silver; fully covered by silver bullion, they would constitute perfectly honest money.

Of course, the Treasury would have to protect its position by placing a tariff on silver, incidentally getting a revenue from silver purchased abroad for consumption. Unless a silver shortage developed, it should maintain an excise tax on plated silverware, and further to strengthen its position, it should be empowered and instructed to levy a mining royalty on all silver mined, in proportion to the price of silver—designed to provide a brake on excessive production and to return to the nation a share of the value created by protective legislation; such royalty could of course be paid in silver to add to the bullion reserve.

V

Given such a threefold method of control—tariff to prevent unwanted influx of the metal, precious metal excise taxes to promote silver consumption and conserve gold, mining royalties to control volume of direct silver extraction—the Treasury would have the means at hand to hold the market value of silver at any reasonable ratio to gold—and allow the market to demonstrate what is reasonably feasible.

What that ratio finally should be involves factors far too lengthy to discuss here, but it should probably be nearer thirty to one than the present ratio of about seventy-five to one. But if conducted on the basis of demonstration, instead of attempting a fiat and fictitious declaration of unproved value, the change would be a gradual one.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One can not, however, leave this question of ratio, without touching on a fallacy which has been revived. Professor Warren, in his discussion of prices, has frequently stated that "the price of wheat is the ratio of the supply of wheat and the demand for it to the supply of gold and the demand for it." That piece of perfect mumbo-jumbo is mentioned, because it leads directly into the old sixteen-to-one argument of the silverites. As far as actual supply and demand go, they are necessarily equal—what supply and demand conditions do is to determine the price at which they balance. But if the two are equal, then Professor Warren's formula would lead to the statement that prices are proportionate to relative volume. That was the plea of Bryan's days, that since world production of silver, in the long run, is sixteen times that of gold, equity demanded a sixteen-to-one ratio of gold to silver. The farmer, who knows more about soil mining than metal mining may be deceived by that statement, but he would hardly concede that the price of wheat should be so determined. World production of wheat is about 4,300,000,000 bushels; with a gold production of 20,000,000 ounces, that would make an ounce of gold worth some 200 bushels, or a price today of about seventeen cents a bushel! The cotton farmer would be equally pleased with the result of balancing 25,000,000 bales, or say 12,500,000,000 pounds of fiber against some $800,000,000 gold—about six cents a pound for cotton under our new standard!

Relative volumes have nothing to do with price. The going price of a product is usually determined by the cost of the marginal producer. In the case of gold, the problem is relatively simple; but in the case of silver the problem of price is immensely complicated because nearly all the white metal is produced willy-nilly as a by-product. Instead, therefore, of being able to attack the problem by examining production costs, it must be attacked by determining marginal utility in consumption, and that is spread over many different items.

Since the very nature of that problem will require a long time to demonstrate what the relative value of silver really is, we can not hope to establish a permanent ratio in a hurry. That does not, however, preclude an early improvement in the price of silver, sufficient to justify a moderate use of the Treasury's authority to purchase silver; more than that should not be expected. There may be a quarter billion ounces of purchasable bullion in existence; there would be no sense in rashly bidding up the price to a level far above its real value. If we want to use about two billions of silver in our monetary reserve, that will have to be very slowly accumulated; the world's gold reserves have taken centuries to build up and now amount to about fifty years' consumption in the arts.

James P. Warburg pointed out last November, that to invent a new monetary system, better than any the world has ever known, in the course of a few weeks is practically impossible. To build up silver reserves equal to some thirty years of our own consumption is equally impossible in less than a generation, without destroying the very consumption which gives silver its value.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Permanently Unemployed

By Henry Carter

What is to be done with the millions of workers for whom there is no chance of employment even if we return to 1929 prosperity?

For the past several weeks—or months—signs have not been lacking to assure us that economic recovery is definitely in progress in the United States. Perhaps most revelatory of the fact of recovery is the growing chorus from the business community that governmental restraints be withdrawn in order that business may be free to complete the restoration of prosperity according to its own lights and in its own manner. One has only to contrast this attitude with the helplessness of business a twelvemonth ago to conclude that a major change in conditions has taken place, one which may be described as constituting a fair measure of recovery.

It is generally agreed that the economic collapse and depression of the past four years were fundamentally due to the dislocation and curtailment of the purchasing power of great sections of our population. Their inability to buy the products of our farms and factories led to the destruction of the price level and the disappearance of profits, which in turn threw unprecedented millions into unemployment, thus further reducing their purchasing power, in the vicious spiral of depression. To reverse this spiral and to increase and spread purchasing power was the task imposed upon the Roosevelt Administration, and to that end its energies have been devoted with no small degree of success. Prices have risen, production has increased, three million people have gone back to work, profits are once more coming in sight, there is ground for optimism and encouragement.

Nevertheless, the depression has inflicted on our social and economic structure injuries and changes no less far-reaching than those of a prolonged war, and it is to a different world and to fundamentally altered conditions that recovery is returning. During the lean years we have had to draw heavily on our savings and on our credit, individual and national; the foreign trade upon which our agriculture was so largely dependent must be rebuilt from the bottom up, a work of years with little prospect of its regaining anything approaching the peaks of the War and post-War decades. More ominous yet is the existence in the United States of an army of unemployed variously estimated at eight and a half to eleven millions, nearly a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fifth of our working population, and the further prospect that of these millions less than half can hope to be reabsorbed into private industry even after recovery, thus leaving an alarmingly large number who will be permanently and directly dependent on governmental action for their support. Indeed a distinguished British journalist recently commented with more than a little truth that the most significant effect of the depression upon the United States is that it has saddled the country with permanent unemployment as a political problem of prime and paramount importance. One might go further to say that the test of recovery will be the extent to which it reaches these masses and furnishes them with purchasing power, for without a general and wide-spread buying power to sustain it recovery—and profits—will be limited, onerous taxes will continue or increase, and a dangerous body of discontent and suffering will remain with its inevitable threat to the social and political structure of the United States. Unemployment, while a symptom and a result rather than a basic cause of depression, affords the tangible measuring rod by which the level of fundamental factors may be read. On it will be marked the success or failure of our economic and political institutions in providing purchasing power for the whole nation, namely recovery for all as contrasted with a treacherous and unsubstantial prosperity for the few.

II

Curiously enough, no one knows just how many unemployed there are or how many there have been during the depression years. The Department of Labor does not know, nor does the newly established United States Employment Service, nor the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. Statistics are in course of preparation but the data on which they are based are fragmentary, incomplete, chaotic, often misleading, and are derived rather from comparative figures of employment than from any systematic census or registration of the unemployed. Unofficial estimates of considerable value have been compiled by the American Federation of Labor, the National Industrial Conference Board, and individuals such as Colonel Ayres of the Cleveland Trust Company and Dr. Kreps of Leland Stanford University. While different methods have been used in computing these, they all agree that unemployment at its peak in March, 1933, was between thirteen and fourteen millions, the National Industrial Conference Board report showing 13,200,000 as compared with the American Federation of Labor's figure of 13,689,000. It seems certain that it was not less than this level and in the opinion of some observers it actually ran as high as 16,000,000.

The passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act provided the impetus for the reëmployment in industry of approximately three million during 1933, principally through the device of limiting the hours of labor and compelling the spreading of work at what was hoped would be purchasing wages, although the subsequent rise of prices and in the cost of living has tended to reduce the purchasing power thus produced. Apparently on the theory that the reëmployment of one man in productive industry involves the reëmployment of another man in the so-called service industries such as transportation and retailing, the Na-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tional Industrial Conference Board has recently estimated the unemployed in February, 1934, at 8,610,000, with which Colonel Ayres's figures, computed on a similar basis, appear to be in accord. The American Federation of Labor, on the other hand, does not believe this formula to be reliable, particularly at a time when production and distribution are still under normal, and estimates the unemployed in February, 1934, at 11,374,000, a figure which would appear to be corroborated by the Secretary of Labor's report of February 12, 1934, which shows a gain in employment of less than three million over last year's low. While it is difficult to be dogmatic, factors such as the growth of total population and the increasing number of those whose savings have become exhausted and who must now depend upon being employed for a living, would appear to give credence to the estimates of the American Federation of Labor in preference to those of the National Industrial Conference Board: for practical purposes it would seem reasonable to assume that the actual number of unemployed at the present moment is close to 11,000,000.

It must be said at once that a certain number of these would presumably be unemployed even in the best of times. In the so-called normal years of 1925 and 1926 there were one and a half to two million unemployed, and in the boom year of 1929 this figure rose as high as three million according to generally accepted estimates. Of this number seasonal and technological developments in industry accounted for perhaps 1,500,000, which would appear to constitute a normal number of temporarily unemployed persons, the other half representing superannuated workers and other unemployables who could no longer find jobs to which they were adapted. Since 1929 the improvement of technological devices and methods in industry has increased the potential of productive industry by possibly ten to fifteen per cent; the physical and psychological effects of the depression and of the long lay-offs have added to the number of permanently unemployable; and it would not be far wrong to estimate the total of persons who would in normal times be permanently or temporarily unemployed for these reasons at 4,000,000. This would still leave 7,000,000 employable persons to be reabsorbed into permanent employment. The question is, can it be done? On the answer depends the ultimate fate of this Administration and its successors.

In spite of the three million or so reemployed since March, 1933, private industry, to reach the 1929 levels of employment, would, according to the employment figures of the Department of Labor, have to furnish yet another four and a half million jobs. The enormousness, if not the impossibility, of such a task need only be stated to be apparent. To accomplish it would require an increase of a million in the durable goods industries, and half that number in consumption goods industries, plus another million in the building trades, and perhaps two million in the field of service industries. Assuming that such a programme is eventually possible, there would still be a residue of 2,500,000 employable persons, in addition to the 4,000,000 unemployable or temporarily unemployed, even when recovery to 1929 levels is attained. Actually private industry will have done well if it can reabsorb a million workers in the course of the next

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

six months; thereafter its ability to re-employ becomes too problematical for useful speculation. On this showing, the number of unemployed six months from now is substantially certain to be not less than 6,500,000 and is much more likely to amount to nine to ten millions. For these adequate provision and purchasing power must be found if fresh economic depression and possible political disaster are not to ensue. With the resources of private charity for relief practically exhausted, and those of local and State governments nearly so, it is clear that the brunt of this burden will fall inevitably upon the Federal Government, nor can the Government refuse it without imperiling its existence.

At present the President's emergency programme is providing for about half of the 11,000,000 now unemployed. Three hundred thousand men are being employed in American forests by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the Public Works Administration is affording work for a similar number, which will be approximately tripled during the coming year. The work projects initiated and supported by the Civil Works Administration are still employing some two million on part-time work. In these categories about three million people are being provided for *temporarily*. Besides these, 2,700,000 families are reported as on direct relief, and the indications are that this number is increasing rather than diminishing in measure as savings become exhausted and hope of jobs in private industry fades. Over and above these remain more than five million unemployed for whom no present provision is being made, either by government or by recovery in private industry. It is not a reassuring picture; yet it is the one which will dominate the social and political scene for years to come.

III

For unemployment and its attendant problems there is, seemingly, no panacea. Neither Great Britain nor Germany, which have suffered greatly in this respect, have found one, nor has the United States, as it enters upon the problem which has challenged the older industrial nations for the past fifteen years. Even though private industry in its recovery returns to 1929 employment levels, it will still fail to provide occupation and purchasing power for 6,500,000, for whom, nevertheless, provision must somehow or other be made. Emphatically the tradition and sentiment of the country is against a dole system with its ugly political and social implications, even assuming that we could stand the financial burden. Yet permanently reduced purchasing power for any such number as this can only sap the foundations of recovery and produce a load of taxation for doles and relief which would eventually crush private enterprise. Clearly, broad measures and bold steps are the order of the day if unemployment and the threat of depression and collapse are to be kept within bounds.

The attack will have to be made on not one but many fronts. Unemployment insurance for those temporarily out of work as a result of seasonal and technological changes in industry is at present much discussed and may become the subject of general legislation within the near future. Its utility and social justification seem unquestionable, but its effects would not reach more than the one and a half to two million employables who may reasonably be expected

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to be temporarily jobless in the course of the normal operation of our economic system. However it affords a much needed means of relieving the usual and inevitable stresses in industrial employment, and by maintaining purchasing power on a broad scale would directly benefit productive enterprise. As such we should not hesitate over its adoption.

Old age pensions would likewise serve a useful purpose by reducing the number of those seeking gainful employment. While their general adoption might well be urged on humanitarian grounds, their economic advantages are no less compelling. Industry would be cleared of superannuated workers and its efficiency increased to that extent, while the continued purchasing power afforded by pensions would materially assist in maintaining the necessary market for agricultural and industrial products. Estimates suggest that through this means a million and a half or more workers could be retired from the ranks of those dependent on employment. Old age pensions have been used to advantage in Great Britain and elsewhere, and it is not too much to hope that as their economic benefits are grasped the necessary legislation will be forthcoming.

Another method of restoring purchasing power to those now unemployed consists in getting families back to the land. Our overproduced commercial agriculture offers no openings for the unemployed, but the policy of reviving subsistence farming, accompanied by the decentralization of industry from overgrown manufacturing centres and the establishment of local part-time industries, is being actively pursued by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the subsistence farming projects of the Public Works Administration, and is implicit in schemes such as the Tennessee Valley and Columbia River developments. It has already engaged the interest and support of industrialists such as Henry Ford, who may indeed be regarded as a pioneer in this field of social planning, and it may in time attain impressive proportions. Of necessity it must be a slow and gradual process, the results of which will become tangible only over a period of years, and estimates as to its possible extent are meaningless. Its immediate effects upon present unemployment are in the nature of things negligible, but its potential bearing seems unmistakably desirable.

The measures thus far cited, however helpful in themselves, would nevertheless still leave two to three millions of employables for whom neither industry nor agriculture can, even in prosperity, offer a livelihood, yet for whom provision and purchasing power must be found if we are to have a healthy and sound economic and social structure. It seems fair to say that these want jobs, not doles. Unquestionably the most popular and successful measure of relief thus far has been the Civil Works Administration, which offered jobs, temporary though they were, at a living wage. The Civil Works Administration was an emergency project on a temporary basis and as such has been discontinued, but the need for the activities it fostered, and for the occupation and purchasing power it extended, has if anything increased since it began cutting its payrolls. Because private industry, dependent on profits for existence, can not hope, even in the best of times, to take up this section of the unemployed, does it follow that it is impossible for the Government to find socially useful and economically valuable work for these two or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

three millions? A glance at the contemporary scene shows that it is not. Already the Government has at work 300,000 CCC workers, whose activities over a period of years will replace the depleted but immensely valuable forest and timber resources of the nation. Then too, there are 270,000 workers in Public Works Administration projects, and there will be more. Besides these the Government was recently employing over four million CWA workers on a temporary basis, and is still, directly or indirectly, employing two million of them. These are engaged in a variety of projects and services of definite and permanent social utility which constitute demonstrable additions to the economic wealth and well-being of the country: measures of flood control and prevention of soil erosion, public health activities such as malaria control, eradication of agricultural pests, maintenance and improvement of public property, educational and cultural projects. Such a list of desirable public undertakings and services is capable of indefinite expansion and offers a new and permanent field for almost unlimited employment. Supplemented by a suitable programme of public works construction, road building, erection of low-priced housing, and the like, the realm of public services affords the opportunity of dealing with unemployment and low purchasing power in quarters which the recovery of private industry can never hope to reach, and through its expansion in slack times can forestall or cushion the otherwise inevitable effects of depression. We already have these public services as a temporary measure: the desirability and the outright need for making them permanent would, in the light of the total problem, seem apparent.

IV

Unemployment insurance, old age pensions, public works, assistance to subsistence farmers, public services, all these would cost money, a lot of it. Estimates as to the total probable cost must necessarily be of the roughest sort. During the present emergency we are spending $3,300,000,000 on public works; in the past year the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, including its CWA activities, has expended $1,600,000,000, providing for an average of about 3,000,000 families either through work or direct relief, and it is preparing to spend another $1,200,000,000 in the course of the next eight months, with the possibility of spending considerably more if necessary; the Civilian Conservation Corps is spending at the rate of $350,000,000 a year and giving work to 300,000 men. The total of expenditure for the next twelve months for these purposes will come to not less than five billions and may be nearer six billions. This figure, however, is not as alarming as it sounds. In normal times our national bill for public works, Federal, State and municipal, amounts to about two billions a year, and in 1929 nearly a billion was spent in various forms of private, local, State and Federal relief as a matter of course. With the depression these expenditures have devolved almost entirely upon the Federal Government, a fact which tends to exaggerate their apparent position in our national economy. With the completion of the PWA programme the annual bill for relief would drop to less than three billions at the present rate of expenditure.

Approaching it from another angle, it would seem reasonable to estimate the annual cost of supporting an unem-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ployed individual, whether by unemployment insurance, old age pension, work or direct relief, at about $500. On the basis of six to seven millions permanently unemployable in private industry that expenditure would work out at three to three and a half billions a year. It would accordingly not be far amiss to set the probable cost of such social legislation at three billions annually. How this would be raised and administered raises questions beyond the scope of the present article. Senator Wagner believes that his proposed five per cent Federal tax on payrolls would bring in two billions or more a year in reasonably good times; other authorities are less optimistic and estimate the probable yield at about half that amount, and it might be necessary to levy a moderate profits tax to supplement this sum. Business, of course, would groan at the prospect of such taxation, but it should remember that the money thus raised would, through the expenditures of its beneficiaries, be poured immediately into the channels of trade, thus creating and stimulating an increase of business activities and business profits. Three billion a year, while a large sum in itself, represents a very small percentage of our normal national income, and in the long view would not appear an excessive price to pay for assurance against a repetition of the depression years and against the political dangers of prolonged and widespread unemployment.

In spite of recovery the problem of unemployment will still confront us. We have a people who want not charity or relief but jobs, useful jobs at purchasing wages. If industry can not furnish enough of these—and it can not—the unemployed will look to the Government. There are ten million of them and they can vote.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Southern View of Northern Reformers

By Arthur Styron

Northerners who feel indignantly superior over such things as the Scottsboro trials should know what the South thinks about their attitude

Born and reared in a small Southern town, I gained my first impression of the North from a small group of determined Yankee reformers and agitators who had descended upon us to improve our community. They were regarded with not a little awe by the puzzled townspeople, who spoke of them as "Yankee ladies" or "gentlemen," or simply as "Puritans"; and I remember how we used to watch them (behind closed shutters, since politeness was an essential) as they passed along the street, probably looking, like the Red Queen, for something of which to disapprove. There were five or six ladies who taught in the Negro schools; one or two Protestant ministers who preached in the Negro churches; a few minor "intellectuals" who were interested in a Negro newspaper; and of course a number of Republican politicians who, as practical and acquisitive men, had little use for their more idealistic colleagues except in so far as the latter's single-minded idealism served to give a good reputation and a "progressive" flavor to the political régime then culling rich profits in the South. Altogether these reformers and politicians constituted, with the younger Negro element, the standard-bearers of the flag and the staunch defenders of the Union: a little Republican oasis in the unreconstructed Democratic South. With the local whites they held no intercourse, not merely because Southerners were loath to associate with whites who mingled intimately with Negroes, but because the reformers themselves welcomed ostracism as enhancing their martyrdom.

Not altogether wrongly perhaps for that day, the South associated the doctrines of these reformers with the general sentiment in the North. When fifty women and children were murdered in cold blood in the Nat Turner Rebellion in Virginia, had not the Northern press generally applauded? Was not John Brown eulogized there for murdering some white boys in Kansas and for attempting to incite a revolt in Virginia that must have resulted in the massacre of hundreds of white men, women and children? Did not Virginia have to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

threaten to send troops into Ohio should the latter State's citizens attempt a rescue of the murderer? Had not a delighted Northern public hailed Emerson's religious caricature that the fanatic had made the Gallows as glorious as the Cross?—and Daniel Webster's son led his Massachusetts company to the "martyr's" grave to sing *His Soul Goes Marching On?* Had not President Lincoln and the entire House received and honored the vicious English reformer Thompson? Had not the North generally approved of the Republican party's barbarous "Reconstruction policies"? Now, still living fearfully in the retreating sinister shadow of that nightmare, Southerners very naturally asked one another if the North would not again applaud if their reformers and agitators should succeed in arousing the blacks against the whites in a bloody race-war in the South. And, as subsequent events proved, they were entirely right about the reformers and half-right about the North.

II

Now, the North—probably because of a more ingrained Puritanism—has always been a fertile soil for breeding reformers, some three or four hundred reforming societies having been organized there (chiefly in New England) in the Nineteenth Century; whereas the South, for the same reason that she was anti-Puritan in pre-Colonial days, has always been strongly anti-reformer, and so far as I know has never organized a single improving society to interfere, with what she regards as atrociously bad manners, in the local affairs of other people and other communities. In the sense, however, of not being "progressive" by repudiating anachronisms, and in providing a problem to which reformers with characteristic single-mindedness assume they have the exact answer, the South has always been a ripe plum for the preachers of discordant "equality" and "freedom"—surely great principles when practised with reason and harmony, but which, when distorted by instinctive reaction, dwindle to mere sympathy for the under-dog that has no more precision than attachment to personal opinion. In the case of the Negro, the reformers typified the permanent Northern attitude towards him as a white man with a blackened face, an attitude necessarily derived from the melodrama, since the average Northerner could not possibly know the Negro in reality; but the sad truth is that when men concentrate upon a cause rather than upon love they reverse the fortitude of understanding and allow what they do not know to disturb what they do know.

The reformers, therefore, completely failed to take into consideration the fact that segregation (for example) might be as pleasant for the Negro as for the white man; that the colored people might prefer actual security to fictitious liberty; and that they might even resent being depicted as "children of nature," "glorious savages," or "futile Russians," as the Romantic poets and the current theatre would have it. Probably it was discouraging that the older and better-class Negroes should have remained cold to the reformers' zealous efforts in their behalf; but the fact was that the Negroes, knowing instinctively that these agitators were less concerned with loving them than with hating the Southerners desperately struggling to preserve the remnants of what was perhaps the most honorable society America had yet produced, gen-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

erally spoke of them as "poor Bochra" behind their backs and continued to give their affection to the Southerners.

So much nonsense has been written about the traditional love between Southern Negroes and whites that it has become a caricature difficult to displace. Actually, it was not based upon sentimentality, cant, demagogy or paternalism, but upon the experience of living together for nearly two centuries in more or less harmony and tolerance of each other's standards and ethics. There was no attempt to obscure the fact that these standards were distinct; but at least in such a democracy there was no hypocritical equality, and in such liberty as each enjoyed no savage "freedom." This was *unabused* understanding, and from such understanding love not infrequently grows —the sort of love, for example, that the parent feels for his dependent children. In short, the Negro was a part of the white family. His position might be that of a perpetual minor, but at any rate he *belonged*.

The particular virtues of the Negro —loyalty, generosity and courtesy— were recognized by the whites and repaid in kind. Any white man who repudiated his responsibility to care for his sick or infirm servants would have been completely ostracized by his community. White children were never allowed to address a grown Negro without a handle to his name: it was always "Aunt" or "Uncle" or "Mammy." Southern men returned the salute of any colored man who removed his hat; Southern boys tipped their caps first to Negro ministers and the aged. Economically, the status of the Negro was infinitely better than it is now. All the servants (and Southern families, however poor, felt obligated to keep as many as possible) were Negroes, as were the barbers, professional nurses, and so on. Blacks had the best fish and vegetable and meat stalls in the market. The tradesmen—carpenters, brick-layers, plumbers—were mostly colored. No Southerner dreamt of trespassing upon their province, and indeed such a trespasser would have been boycotted by the white public. (It was the later influx of Northerners who, unused to Negroes, began the demand for white servants and artisans.) Negroes were admitted to the professions, legal and medical, before they were in many Northern States. Slaves who had had the aptitude had been well educated, particularly in music and such arts as their race excels in, and many of them were singers, musicians and writers of note who compare more than favorably with the modern Negro "intellectuals" from other sections of the nation. The ante-bellum disfranchisement had applied only to slaves, free Negroes having been permitted to vote without question until Northern agitation made it dangerous; and even after the Civil War, when the franchise was universally granted in the South, a few Northern States withheld it for a long time.

III

At the time of which I write the Republicans were, of course, in complete control by virtue of the Negro vote and the general impotence of the South. The Mayor, all the members of the town-council, the policemen, and so on, were Republicans—white and black. Southerners avoided the law whenever they could and retreated to the church for moral sanction of their social institutions. Homes were secretly guarded night and day. Women and girls went

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

out at night only when adequately protected.

Such a condition could not, of course, long continue, and it was my own age that saw the end of it. The revolt was minor but it was none the less decisive—the match, so to speak, that the national Government wisely allowed to burn out ere it lit a conflagration. The North at the time was beginning to react against the barbarism of the Reconstruction; in Washington the Democratic Cleveland Administration was having a liberalizing effect; in the South, the white Democratic leaders wanted no more than to regain their supremacy.

Probably annoyed by the dwindling of their Cause, and perhaps overconfident because of Southern indifference, the Republican reformers became bolder in their efforts to stir up their Negro followers to insolence and revolt—against what, it would be difficult to say, since they already had things very much their own way. Whereas before their attacks on Southerners had been more or less verbal and political, now they began to import arms secretly to insure their continued power, and to attack individual Southerners by scurrilous personalities. The Negro editor of the Republican newspaper one day broke into print with a defamatory item about a prominent White woman . . . and by night his printing-office had been burned and the editor was on his way to New York.

Even then, however, nothing more might have come of the incident had not the Republicans begun collecting their Negro following in bands, distributed arms to them, and urged them to plunder and kill their "proud tyrants." It was rumored that they meant to burn the white school-house with the children in it. Perhaps that was a scare, but I do recall being taken out of the school and sent home in charge of an old Negro policeman. On our piazza sat two grim guards armed with shotguns: they remained there night and day for several months.

It was customary for Southern stores to close at noon for two or three hours. That afternoon none opened. At three o'clock groups of Southern men began to appear suddenly at every street corner. All Negroes and white Republicans were searched for arms and, if none were discovered, sent home. Placards were posted simply stating that the white Southerners meant to take over their government, and ordering Republicans to resign their offices peaceably. Negroes were warned to remain at home and they would not be harmed. Southern families without men-folk, or too poor to provide guards for their homes, were advised to seek safety in the Episcopal Church, a magnificent Eighteenth Century edifice as large and strong as a fortress.

The white Republicans (reformers and politicians) promptly resigned their offices and fled, the Northerners going North, the very few Southerners taking to tents in the woods. The Negroes were braver. A considerable band collected in a Negro hospital or school-house (I forget which) and defied the authorities, whereupon the building was fired and in the resulting battle one white man and twenty Negroes were killed.

How many were actually killed in the two days' fighting has never been definitely determined, the whites maintaining that the twenty-one victims of the school-house battle were the only ones, the Negroes claiming that several hundred of their race were shot

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for resistance or concealment of arms and their bodies hastily disposed of in the river. Our home adjoined the City Hall and was therefore in the centre of the town, so that I believe I should have witnessed any riot so dimensional as the Negroes claimed; but all I recall is seeing the mayor of the town walking alone down the middle of the road, his head bent, a small group of silent men behind him, on his way to the railroad station where a ticket to New York awaited him; seeing a Negro woman being taken, screaming, to jail, a razor having been found in her oyster-bucket; and my mother hiding a Negro boy of sixteen, chased by some white youths, in our china-closet and sending the young rowdies away.

IV

A glance at the Northern press, periodicals, drama and other channels of social intelligence, will reveal the fact that the North is still a fertile soil for the production of reformers, and that their chief object of improvement is still the long-suffering South. Can it be that the dispute between the two sections has lost its historical perspective and become mere destructive criticism, which, being the will to destroy, is thinly disguised hatred?

While the South always has and still dislikes Northern political and social standards, such an attitude can not be construed as hatred for the reason that it has never been organized to destroy what it opposes. When the North chose industry, the South made no effort to impose slavery upon her. When the North chose industrial nationalism, the South only asked for separation to preserve her own Colonial ideals of democracy. When Northern factories enslaved millions of men, women and children, the South organized no anti-factory crusades to subvert their economic structure. . . . When Boston authorities electrocuted two miserable fanatics for a crime many thoughtful people believed they did not commit, no Southern poet rose for the occasion to say that the Chair had been made as glorious as the Cross, and compose a rhyme to be sung at the martyrs' graves. When Long Island police beat a prisoner to death in a third-degree examination, no Southern columnist-preacher demanded that the Federal Government land marines there. When a California mob brutally lynched and mutilated a brace of kidnappers, no Southern State officially protested. When Northern murderers have escaped into the South, no Southern judge has prevented their extradition for no other ground than that he personally disapproved of Northern justice. No Southern societies have sent objectionable lawyers into the North to obstruct and circumvent Northern justice. No group of Southern "intellectuals" has gone forth into Northern industrial centres to tell the people how to manage their affairs. In other words, the South today is as opposed as it ever was to officious meddling with other people's affairs, considering (and rightly) that it has enough to do to reform its own life, and that another section, whatever its shortcomings, has a group of enlightened people who will see to the same thing in their own community.

This difference is generally explained by the reformers by the "backwardness" of the South; but another explanation is that in the North a more extensive system of mass-education gives a higher rating of importance to the lower-class (from which reformers

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

usually spring) which at the same time provides a larger audience for its "intellectuals" whose intellectuality consists principally in an ability to articulate the sentiments of their class and make its restless desire for change appear to be "progressive." Agitators thrive best, therefore, on fomentations that bring the dregs to the top; and since effective fomentations are religious and political, it might be expected that the agitation would be concentrated mainly upon the race-persecution technique which involves both the religious and the political implications.

Thus a young New York Jew who spent several nights in Southern jails (providing kindly shelter to an indigent) proceeds to write a drama based upon an isolated criminal case in a Southern State which he modestly asserts is meant to interpret "the whole South"; nor can the incident be dismissed as the individualistic venture of an alien and uninformed temperament when a high-class New York theatrical organization produces the play and the local press hails it as high-grade realism. In New York the press would naturally reflect the vulgarian standards of a great city; but the question arises as to why any Northern community, which would doubtless be fair toward a similar criminal case nearer home, so readily falls in line with any alien, radical, fanatical, and even vicious fanaticism solely because it is directed against the South. The question of capital punishment might be debated abstractly; but in view of the apparent guilt of the defendants—the testimony of their victims, of their white companions and of other witnesses, not to mention the confessions of the prisoners themselves, which were necessarily excluded from the trial because of the first-degree indictment—the tactics of Northern radical criminal lawyers and the sudden and suggestive recanting of one of the principal witnesses, followed by the general assumption by the Northern press that the respectable citizens of an intelligent and prosperous little Southern town would conspire against a number of Negro boys for the sheer delight of seeing them electrocuted, all indicate the sentiment of a community desirous of believing only the worst that can be said about another.

To a Southerner enough of a realist not to get excited about the ceaseless rise and fall of ideas and opinions, it is a source of puzzlement, and frequently of humor, to pick up a New York newspaper and read that a Negro has been atrociously lynched in the South for rape and murder, that five or six gang murders have occurred in Chicago or New York or Boston, that a cabinet member or two have been indicted for theft or bribery, that a revolt in a great Northern prison has resulted in a score of inmates escaping and several guards being killed, that the local police have maltreated prisoners or beaten up jobless and hungry protestants against capitalism, that new frauds have been uncovered in the city or Federal governments, and so on—and find the one editorial devoted to abuse of the South for the lynching outrage! Or, if the Negro has been convicted legally, then Southern justice and laws are impugned.

Violence, whether by direct action or by a species of pioneer justice, is a sign of barbarism subject to civilizing influence; but it is an open question whether violence is as deplorably hopeless as the break-down of justice in a complex-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ity and partiality of laws and the activities of pettifoggers in law who, accustomed to pleading for fee-paying clients without discrimination of what is right and wrong, have lost their moral sensibility of those distinctions. It may at first sound far-fetched to observe that the reformers' eternal emphasis on humanitarianism, or the theory of making everything good by law, indirectly serves the ends of materialism; but reflection and history will show that if the masses can be convinced that good is served by statutes, they can be made to believe that what is legal is good: greed, if satisfied legally, is morally good. Only the most ingenuous person would believe that laws which provide loop-holes for the rich and powerful to break through were stupidly written: they are deliberately made that way by unscrupulous lawyers in collusion with corrupt government officials. Naturally, this tendency of Big Business to commit its crimes "legally" and buy up the best minds in the legal profession would not stop short of its ultimate goal, the dominance of the tribunal itself; and that was why Jefferson went so far as to maintain that lawyers and judges should never be allowed to make nor interpret the law for the reason that, being of the specialized type of mind inclined to put prestige first in their profession, they would make the world revolve around a statute, and, being men as frail as human nature, would generally serve their self-interests rather than principle. The current hue and cry about the law—of the industrialists about the sanctity of courts and especially the Supreme Court, and of the reformers about a new set of statutes to regulate social and economic life—has all the marks of a smoke-screen to hide the sordid fact that the tribunal, though the symbol of the highest ideals of civilized justice, may become through domination by powerful factors a mere criminal tribunal, and that it may even come to serve the interests of organized crime itself. Lynching, barbarous as it is, becomes in comparison with such a perversion of law an expression of an outraged desire for justice. Man's inhumanity to man is, after all, not written in terms of violence but in terms of law. The violence of the French Revolution was insignificant as compared to the excesses of the *legal* Terror instituted by the Tribunal; and the lesson to be derived therefrom is that when the law becomes independent of justice, it ceases to be the "bread of the nation," and . . . men will not always go hungry without protest.

V

In the South's conception of justice, therefore—that is, justice to society rather than to the offender—the reformers are quick to discover another "anachronism" in that it demands that the criminal shall be deprived of the privileges of society; that the torturer of innocent victims shall be similarly flogged; and that punishment shall consist of hard labor which the criminal most dreads, crime being the result in most cases of a desire to live without laboring. The question of justice must inevitably collide with that of cruelty for the reason that it involves punishment. What is justice to the myriads may be injustice to the individual; but that is a human limitation, a limitation that is not lessened but magnified by dispensing justice to the individual and injustice to the myriads. Not only in the South but in other civilized coun-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tries—notably France and England—does this conception hold sway; and it is probably demonstrable that in these countries there are fewer criminals, fewer prisons, less organized racketeering and fewer gifted legal "mouthpieces" than in the North. Nor can this condition be readily dismissed as the result of a higher degree of industrialization in the great urban centres in the North, for that would merely transfer the stigma to industrialization itself.

The prevalent Northern conception of justice as being concerned primarily with what is good for the criminal has its roots in the Puritan conception of hell which "divine man" was too good for and which he could readily avoid by the doctrine of election. In Northern prisons the criminal is physically separated from the society he has outraged and deprived of the liberty he has abused; but at the same time he is provided with all sorts of substitutes—commissaries to sell him ice cream and dainties; athletic games, movies, lectures, radios, to amuse him; "trusty" privileges that inevitably are bought as well as earned; etc. The degree of confinement that remains in these country-club prisons is not much worse than many strict schools; the fare as good or better than the average army mess; the separation from his family only nominal to the robber and murderer and rapist whose irresponsibility has already made him take those ties too lightly. The net result of such sentimentality is that the criminal, subjected to irritation rather than punishment, has a contempt for but little fear of such prisons; crime is not greatly checked, and (most serious of all) the law is cheated and justice mocked. Moreover, such a system encourages mutinies and escapes, thus refuting the theory that reform is the sole function of justice, and at the same time unnecessarily sacrificing the lives of loyal prison guards and officials.

Another favorite theme for Northern reformers which demonstrates admirably the truth that they derive their energy from the nearest materialistic source is child-labor in the South, agitation against which served the ends of industrialism as did their anti-slavery crusades in the past century. In antebellum days child-labor was unknown in the South, only two out of several hundred factories being located in that section, and Southerners generally regarded conditions in Northern mills as deplorable though they made no organized effort to "improve" them. Even in my own childhood when, the old economic life having been destroyed, factories began to appear in the South (usually financed and operated by Northern capital), the use of child-labor evoked local indignation, especially on the part of Southern women. True, most of this child-labor was black, but that did not alter the principle. In time white children were employed as it was found they had superior adaptability to the Negroes. Later, when manufacturing grew into a Southern institution, and New England's textile supremacy was threatened, the reformers began to wax moral about child (or cheap) labor, the abolition of which would, of course, have increased production-costs and diminished competition. Now that the South has voluntarily abolished child-labor and a constitutional amendment is proposed to outlaw it universally, who are now the opponents of the amendment but those formerly protesting against child *textile* labor?

There are enough other things the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reformers would like to improve in the South to fill a volume; but Southerners generally meet such violent criticisms with silence, secure in the belief that they are both civilized and distinctively American. There is, of course, a new and growing plutocracy in the South; but that this class has never been accepted as the aristocracy, and that their standards have never been canonized or aped by the Southern masses who remain democratic and liberal without smugness or demagogy, is the best evidence that the old ideology is not yet dead. That there is a considerable lower-class that is extremely poor, anti-social, and sometimes even vicious, is likewise true; but the potentialities of even that material would rank very promisingly with the slum-products of Northern cities. However, it is this class on which the Northern reformers fasten, both from an instinct to sympathize only with what is sordidly unsuccessful and from the necessity of finding Southerners to whom they may appear superior, as representative of social conditions in the South. This explains the popularity in the North of the Faulkner and Caldwell brand of literature: it represents what the mass of Northerners *want* to believe about the South. And while knowledge may sometimes be successfully used to combat ignorance, against prejudice and feeling it is, alas, of little avail.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tariff Bargains

By William P. Black

The conception of "Yankee trading" which underlies the new tariff bill does not augur well for an increase of foreign trade

President Roosevelt's skill in the selection of similes has been of value more than once in swinging public opinion to his side. In the campaign for authority to negotiate reciprocal tariff agreements, there is no question but that his references to "Yankee trading" were very useful. By bringing in the image of our shrewd New England forebears, the President caught the public's fancy and helped build a favorable attitude toward tariff-bargaining.

At the same time, by word of mouth and by press comment from Washington, President Roosevelt's capabilities as a good, old-fashioned horse trader were thoroughly publicized. As a result, in spite of the fuming of protectionists and the dire predictions of industrial ruin, issuing from boosters for the "America Self-Contained" ideal, tariff authority was granted with surprisingly feeble congressional opposition.

There now comes the problem of living up to the expectations raised in the minds of the President's admirers. Intentionally or not, use of the phrase "Yankee trading" and stress on the President's excellence as a horse trader have carried the implication that the Administration can be counted on to get somewhat the better of any bargains it may make with foreigners. Many enthusiasts for the Roosevelt régime appear to be looking forward to the satisfaction of seeing their idol outwit the crafty European or Latin-American negotiator.

Others, of course, see in reciprocal agreements the single means of salvaging America's dwindling export trade. Thousands engaged in the production of cotton, wheat, tobacco and hogs realize that their only hope for lasting prosperity resides in restored export markets. To the more thoughtful of these, it has become apparent that foreign buying can not reach its former scale until our own purchases of foreign merchandise increase.

But by far the larger proportion of industrialists and agriculturalists give as yet no clear indication that they have recognized the fact that sales abroad are dependent on purchases abroad. What these people want are agreements which will open up foreign markets without return concessions to improve the foreigner's opportunity of selling his goods in the United States.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It is this large, unenlightened group that represents the chief obstacle for the Administration in the negotiation of tariff agreements. To ignore the will of these voters is to commit political suicide. To yield to it is to confine tariff negotiations to the old type of hard bargain which dominated the reciprocal tariff agreements of 1892–1895 and 1900–1910.

II

Unfortunately, the popular conception of "Yankee trading" appears to be an exchange wherein the Yankee gets all the best of the bargain. Observance of the principle of trading small favors for large, which guided our past experiments in reciprocal tariff-bargaining, is likely to be insisted upon again. The public expectation is that the President will see to it that our export trade is expanded while no great increase in competitive imports will be permitted to upset our domestic economy.

In 1890, when the McKinley Tariff Act was passed with provisions for our first large-scale experiment in reciprocity, the United States was a debtor nation. In those days, it perhaps paid to drive a hard bargain along the lines of the popular notion of "Yankee trading." A favorable trade balance was then a necessity, for interest and dividends had to be paid on foreigners' investments here.

Under this tariff, coffee, tea, hides, sugar and molasses were to be on the free list for nations not discriminating against American products. Penalty duties were provided for use against nations having rates judged "unfair and unreasonable" by the President. With sugar a drug on the market, the threat of penalty duties was useful in forcing tariff concessions from Latin-American cane sugar states and European beet sugar states.

In agreements with Brazil, Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Germany, Austria-Hungary, with Spain for Cuba and Puerto Rico and with Great Britain for certain West Indies colonies, the United States obtained important tariff adjustments in favor of its products. During the four-year period, 1892–1895, when the bulk of these agreements were in force, a world-wide economic depression was taking place. There were, in addition, revolutionary disturbances in several Latin-American countries.

For these reasons, statistics on American foreign trade are not a wholly accurate measure of the effects of the agreements. Nevertheless, exports, particularly to reciprocal countries, rose substantially while imports were lower at the end of the period than at the beginning.

The Yankee trader, on paper, at least, had triumphed over his Latin-American and European adversary. He had swapped small favors for large and had thereby increased the favorable trade balance of the United States. The loss, if any, was in the good will of the other parties in the deals.

This loss was given recognition by the Democratic House Ways and Means Committee in 1894 in reporting favorably a new tariff bill which eliminated the reciprocity provisions of the McKinley Act. The committee, in fact, refused to admit that McKinley reciprocity amounted to anything more than retaliation against nations that refused to yield. "Ill feeling" against the United States in the three penalized countries, Colombia, Venezuela and Haiti, was pointed to as the un-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

happy result of Republican foolishness in tariff matters.

But the Republicans were not easily discouraged. When they returned to power in 1897, they immediately set about to reincorporate the reciprocity principle in the tariff. Under the Dingley Tariff Act, reciprocal agreements of far wider scope than those possible under the McKinley Act were provided for. The Dingley Act, likewise, included the always popular penalty provisions.

The principal bargaining sections were: (1) a special list of import products, consisting of argols, distilled spirits, wines and works of art, eligible for reductions in duties if exporting states granted equivalent concessions on products of the United States; (2) penalty duties for tea, coffee, tonka and vanilla beans in case of discrimination against the United States; (3) authority for the President to negotiate general reciprocity treaties—subject to ratification by both House and Senate —wherein duties could be lowered as much as twenty per cent in return for equivalent concessions by other countries.

Two series of what were popularly known as "argol agreements" were made as provided under Section 1. The first was completed under the McKinley Administration and consisted of treaties with France, Portugal, Germany and Italy. Later agreements were made under the Theodore Roosevelt Administration with Spain, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Great Britain and the Netherlands.

In these agreements, as in the reciprocity deals of 1892–1895, the United States drove hard bargains. The concessions granted were of extremely limited importance compared with the benefits obtained. France alone appears to have been given an even break or better. The United States obtained the minimum tariff rates of Germany, Spain, Portugal and Bulgaria; special remissions or reductions of duty from Italy, Great Britain and the Netherlands and a substantial modification of France's tariff discrimination.

In return, the United States granted a seventy per cent cut in argol duties, a twenty-two per cent cut on distilled spirits, a twenty-five per cent cut on sparkling wines, a twenty-two per cent cut on still wines and a twenty-five per cent cut on works of art. None of these items bulked large in the export trade of nations other than France. Even with the reductions, the duties on argols and works of art were above the 1894 tariff rates, the duty on distilled spirits was approximately the same and the duties on wines were alone appreciably lower.

Statistics on American foreign trade during the life of the "argol agreements" again form a somewhat unreliable base for estimating the effects of the agreements. There is, however, every evidence that the United States got all the better of the deals. The percentage of American exports, going into the reciprocity countries, showed a steady increase, whereas not until the final year of the treaty period did imports of reciprocity articles show an appreciable increase and this, in dollars and cents, was minute compared to the increase in exports.

Meanwhile, attempts to put into effect real "give-and-take" reciprocal agreements, as authorized under Section 3 of the Dingley Act, came to nothing. Comprehensive treaties of this nature were negotiated with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

France and a number of Latin-American states by George A. Kasson, the President's special tariff commissioner. In spite of the efforts of Kasson and the pleas of McKinley, himself, the treaties were never reported out of the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations. Foreign nations were apparently given too nearly an even break.

Credit for the defeat of the treaties was given by the New York *Tribune* to the faint praise with which the so-called "manufacturers' reciprocity convention of 1901" damned the reciprocity idea. The gathering declared itself favorable to reciprocity "only where it can be accomplished without injury to any of the domestic interests of manufacturing, commerce or farming."

As the New York *Tribune* was quick to point out in its comments on the meeting, any such qualification would preclude the ratification of treaties built on real reciprocity. As a consequence of the convention's resolution and of other opposition of a more forthright character, the treaties remained in a committee pigeonhole. Even the one-sided "argol agreements" soon declined in popularity.

Their end came when the whole theory of reciprocity was abandoned in the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act of 1909. The new act reverted frankly to the retaliatory or penalty motif. It provided two sets of rates, one twenty-five per cent higher than the other, with the high rate to apply against nations giving unsatisfactory treatment to United States products.

With two nations only has the United States experimented with reciprocity since the wind-up of the "argol agreements." The first is Cuba, with which an arrangement for preferential tariffs has existed since its freedom from Spanish rule. In this arrangement, the moral obligations of the United States have usually received more stress than the economic desirability of mutual concessions. Nevertheless, from the standpoint of actual trade figures, the United States has had by far the best of the bargain.

With Brazil, from 1904 to 1923, a so-called reciprocal agreement was in effect. Actually, it amounted to nothing more than preferential treatment by Brazil of certain United States products as insurance against the invoking of a three cents duty on coffee, authorized by the Dingley Act. Hence, the agreement boiled down to preferential treatment obtained by means of an implied threat rather than through mutual concessions.

III

Thus, the whole history of American tariff-making shows an insistence on getting the best of the bargain. The same thought seems to inspire a large proportion of the present-day advocates of reciprocal bargaining. The sand-bagging qualification, tied by the "manufacturers' reciprocity convention of 1901" to its approval of reciprocity, was, in fact, repeated almost verbatim in a resolution by the Middle West Foreign Trade and Merchant Marine Conference in Detroit in March, 1934.

Now, there is admittedly danger in depending too much on historical precedent. There is the outside chance that President Roosevelt's popularity would permit him to defy this traditional American attitude against tariff concessions that injure domestic interests, no matter how unimportant. From indications now visible, however, there will be tremendous resistance to deals

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which permit the entry of competitive foreign merchandise.

One has only to recall the outburst which greeted publication of the quickly disowned "tentative draft" of the President's Commercial Policy Committee's report last January to realize that public opinion is not yet generally reconciled to the sacrifice of "parasitic" industries in the interests of an improved export trade. President Roosevelt, Secretary Hull and Secretary Wallace each showed a recognition of this when they promised a cautious approach to tariff-bargaining if authority to negotiate were granted by Congress. Each appears to realize that a great deal of public education must precede the adoption of a programme such as was outlined in the Commercial Policy Committee's "tentative draft."

There is, however, the pressing necessity for doing something to hold our markets for such vital exports as cotton and hog products. Manufactured goods are almost certain to be given secondary consideration in the deals which the President will supervise. Forced by the ever-present surpluses of agricultural produce, the President eventually may be willing to run the political risks inherent in permitting increased imports of competitive foreign merchandise.

For the time being, however, any wholesale influx, such as that foreseen by the more vocal opponents of tariff-bargaining, is unlikely. The odds are that the President, in the interests of political expediency, will first attempt the type of retaliatory tariff deal which marked the so-called reciprocity agreements of the McKinley tariff.

If reports as to the contents of the completed treaty with Colombia can be relied upon, the Administration is already embarked on this course. For this treaty, as described in press dispatches, would oblige Colombia to grant preferential treatment to specified United States products in return for our simple promise to retain Colombia's chief export products, coffee and bananas, on our free list.

Reports from Washington quote the State Department and the President's trade advisers as saying that concessions by the United States in pending agreements will be limited to non-competitive goods. High grade woolens, laces, embroidery and special wines and liquors have been mentioned as likely bargaining items.

Now, it is easy to see that concessions on a list such as this would mean little to foreign countries. They would hardly constitute the bait necessary to induce nations such as France, Germany and Italy to scrap their subsidized agricultural production and revert to the pre-War importation of the bulk of their wheat and lard requirements. There is, likewise, nothing of particular interest to the Latin-American nation in this list.

Of necessity, the Administration, if it really intends to limit concessions to non-competitive products, must try to obtain preferential tariff treatment by means of threats. Since the negotiation of the Colombia treaty, however, the reciprocal tariff act has been passed with the definite stipulation that articles may not be transferred from the free to the dutiable list. The President's power to invoke penalty duties is limited under the act to rate advances of fifty per cent on articles already dutiable.

Under the circumstances, concessions obtained through penalty threats are not likely to be very productive. The

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bargaining position of the United States, furthermore, is no longer strong. Only a handful of nations now sell in America more than they buy. The few important states having active balances in their trade with the United States are Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, the Dutch East and West Indies and British Malaya.

Only with these states and with some of the minor Central and South American nations could the United States use the penalty method without running the risk of losing more than it gained. Meanwhile, as a creditor nation it would lose in the permanent default of debts owed it just about what it would gain through increased exports forced by threat of penalty duties.

There is, thus, no longer any opportunity for "Yankee trading" of the type wherein the Yankee gave little and received much. The Administration, if it would bring real relief to American agriculture by tariff deals, must be prepared to injure some domestic industries. Concessions, warranted to reopen the export markets for American cotton, wheat, tobacco and lard, can be obtained only by return concessions of real value to European and Latin-American export industries.

The dilemma into which reciprocal tariff-bargaining is apt to lead the Administration is already foreseen by Republican leaders. They are said to have secretly hoped that tariff authority would be given the President while they openly voted against the measure. Their idea is that, should the President use his bargaining power in a limited manner, the promised assistance to agriculture will not be forthcoming and discontent will increase in the cotton, wheat and corn belts.

On the other hand, according to this reasoning, if the power is used on a scale sufficient to bring real benefits to agriculture, so many industries will be injured and so many workers will be displaced by imports of competitive foreign goods, that the resulting howl will cause the overthrow of the Democratic Administration. The safer procedure will, of course, be the cautious one, for the principle that the man who is hurt makes more noise than the man who is benefited still holds. It is this fact that leads to the conclusion that tariff-bargaining under the first Administration of Mr. Roosevelt, at least, will do little more than check the decrease in the volume of America's foreign trade.

Until the American public has had its fill of illusory schemes for selling abroad without buying in return, it is improbable that it will give the Administration its support in real give-and-take "Yankee trading." Until it recognizes the fallacy of sales abroad by private lending, by government credit or by the acceptance of silver at an arbitrary and artificial price, it will probably cling to the belief that increased exports are not directly dependent on increased imports.

Thus, the United States, for some time to come, will probably continue to dodge the issues outlined in Secretary Wallace's much quoted *America Must Choose*. How many years must pass before it is willing to take a realistic attitude towards international trade would seem to depend on the ingenuity of its elected leaders in thinking up schemes which appear to avoid the necessity of choosing between a permanently subsidized agriculture and mutual tariff concessions on a scale sufficient to reopen export markets.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rehousing America

By Oliver Whitwell Wilson

The Roosevelt Administration is struggling with a housing problem more acute and of graver implications than most Americans realize

Mr. Robert D. Kohn, a former President of the American Institute of Architects and designer of noble buildings, for many years had journeyed over the United States and surveyed the panorama of prosperity. Everywhere he was invited to look at the finest and latest triumphs of architectural dignity—the stately civic centres, the spacious Union Stations, the local skyscrapers, often solitary in their eminence. But as Housing Director of the New Deal in Washington it was a different United States that he envisaged—no longer the outside of the municipal cup, but the inside of that gorgeous chalice—down to the very dregs. It was for slum clearance and decent homes for the people as a whole that Federal money had been made available.

Mr. Kohn traveled over the country covering more than 8,000 miles and, seeing realities with his own eyes, his astonishment was apocalyptic. In this richest of commonwealths, it could hardly be said that multitudes of homes, especially of the very poor, are homes at all. At least one-half of them are inadequate, and this includes farms. In Wisconsin, to give one instance, 2,000 families were found in derelict lumber camps where the conditions were at least as bad as the worst of slums in the cities.

Broken-down buildings were infested with squalor and dirt. There was a lack of decent sanitation causing disease and especially tuberculosis. The environment led to social and juvenile delinquency, crime, high rates for maternal and infantile mortality, and avoidable street accidents to children. Nor was this the whole story. These were areas that failed to support the financial credit of the community. On the one hand they involved the city in heavy social expenditure. On the other hand they presented a high percentage of tax arrears and a lowering of tax income actually collected.

City balance sheets showed again and again that as much as three times the local revenue yielded by these areas had to be spent within them. New York City's lower East Side actually costs the community four times the income received from it. Much of this money was needed for prevention of crime. Also there was the high cost of social work to offset the lowered physical standard—expenditures that under

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proper living conditions would have been unnecessary.

In many matters, the United States has led the world. But sometimes we have been so busy *making* money that we have not worried over any holes in the purse through which we were *losing* money. Such a leakage has been permitted in real estate. The private investor and speculator has been interested as a rule only in a quick turnover of his capital. He has hoped for a rapid rise in capital land value. He has aimed at an eight to twelve per cent profit, and of improper financing, based on false values, we are now seeing the results. There are mortgages that never represented 100 cents to the dollar, and taxable values which were out of all proportion to an honest valuation. An inevitable result has been the break-down of finance, whether banking or governmental, in many communities.

We dreamed of marble halls, both for business and for living. On these dreams we lavished our money and they seemed to be a sure thing on paper. We made no allowance for possible overproduction of floor space. It did not occur to us that the demand for floor space is, after all, limited. In one city, as an illustration, the first skyscraper was, on completion, filled to capacity. The second could not be filled for the first absorbed the market. When the crash came the loss on that building was one of the reasons why the bank it housed failed to open after the moratorium. The little credit and buying power left in a community twenty-five per cent in distress disappeared overnight.

During the Nineteenth Century, there was a rapid increase in urban population all over our Western civilization. In the United States that increase was accelerated by unrestricted immigration which, over a long period, resulted in a forced growth of cities and population not yet homogeneous. As long as immigration continued there was no difficulty in filling—indeed in overcrowding—any kind of dwellings. Two things have now happened. Immigration, restricted by law, is, in fact, at a standstill. This means that cities depend on the natural increase of population and on migration from the rural to the urban areas. Secondly, there is universal education, not forgetting those movies which familiarize the people with what is meant by a higher standard of living.

People so educated and so stimulated in their desires return to tenements and apartments with small inadequate rooms and a kitchen that looks onto a slit of a court where, inevitably, there is created an odor that is impossible to remove. The resultant dissatisfaction with this hopelessly inadequate provision for a decent home life breeds criminals faster than prisons can be built to house them, and the average age of prisoners in our jails drops lower and lower each year. The mental stability of the nation is affected and a disproportionate expenditure has to be devoted to the care and treatment of the mentally deranged whose numbers increase each year.

Statisticians produce figures to prove that there has been a higher standard of living in the United States than elsewhere. On the average it may have been so. But this high average is the direct result of an exceptionally high standard in the upper strata of society. On the one hand, we have homes where one bath for the family is held to be indecent. There must be two, or three

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or four. On the other hand, there are communities which, according to the reports, have only one bath, if that, for the entire population; and there are many counties in which there is not a single bath for the entire farming population! There are thousands of tenements and farms and houses in America today which have cruder sanitation than that found in Knossos, one of the leading communities of the pre-Classic Minoan civilization. To millions of Americans, the old-time slogan of a higher standard of life is thus meaningless. In the essentials and comforts of life they are desperately poor.

II

Let us try to see the problem in its historic perspective. What chiefly impresses us in the six thousand years of recorded history is that many highly developed civilizations have passed away. Around the eastern Mediterranean there were, in the days of Abraham, many cities, large and small. Yet of those mentioned familiarly in the Book of Genesis, there does not appear to be one, save Damascus, that can be said to have maintained a continuous activity.

It is true that some ancient cities, such as Jerusalem, Athens and Rome, serve a modern people for habitation. But this means that a new and different city has been built upon an old site. The Acropolis at Athens is but a museum of ruins and modern Rome has a long way to go before she fills the perimeter of the ancient walls.

Cities, new and old, grow with the life within them. They do not die until that life has left them and they die, as the oak dies, of disease. So it was with old Delhi, a city of ghosts adjoining a city of men and women. So it has been with the dream city of Angkor and with Chichen-Itza in Yucatan. What failed in all these cities was not marble and bricks and mortar; it was human life. Memphis, Thebes and Bubastis once accommodated a teeming population. Where are those people today? What descendants have they left?

Cities make themselves impossible and have to move on to a new situation. Cairo lies fifteen miles away from the earlier Memphis, that has been empty for hundreds of years. Thebes, filled with ruined temples, is reduced to a few scattered villages and a tourist hotel.

What is the lesson to be learned from archeological research? Surely it is this: the essential need of man is not the big and monumental edifice; it is shelter from the elements; it is housing for the people.

Outside modern Cairo, we find the great necropolis which served ancient Memphis. Above the other tombs which cover the desert's fringe, elaborately constructed with underground chambers, statues, wall reliefs and inscriptions, there rise the three great pyramids of Gizeh. Then, as now, death was a continuous visitor, and the mausoleums required a resident army of artisans, sculptors, painters and priests. Also, there had to be a body of laborers to construct the tombs, to drag the heavy blocks of stone into place, and transport the ponderous sarcophagi from the barges on the Nile. These workers and their families were a large community and we thus find a regularly laid out City of the Dead, and adjacent to it a planned workmen's town. It is the earliest example of town-planning that has been discovered by archeologists.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWARK, OHIO

The pity is that this community should have been no more than an exception which proves the rule. Most ancient cities, like most modern cities, were allowed to expand, higgledy-piggledy, and with disastrous results. It is true that, in the Roman Empire, we find town-planning, as at Timgad in Algeria; many a medieval city in Europe is built, even today, on the original Roman plan. But there were also slums. The Imperial Rome of the first Caesars was a mushroom city, and even in those days the jerry-builder was among the enemies of the people. History has proven over and over again that the contrast between wealth and poverty—reflected in environment—is potentially dangerous. Both the French and the Russian revolutions were a sweeping away, not merely of political inequalities but of unnatural differences in living conditions. Even in the United States, there may come a day of reckoning when it will be realized that firetraps are not homes, and that the symbol of American cleanliness, the bath, if it is a luxury of the millionaire, is also the right of the millions.

III

In the provision of homes for the people, the United States has much to learn from other countries. In England, Germany, Austria and the Soviet Republic, there has been a movement away from the haphazard policy of leaving cities to grow, like Topsy, without any plan. In alleviating bad conditions there has been real progress, and again we may glance down the historic vista.

After the early Egyptian and the Roman examples of town planning, it is not until the Renaissance that we find further examples. Cardinal Richelieu, a man of many activities, was a town planner who built a little self-contained community named for himself. Here, in a sleepy district drenched with memories of the past, can be found the germ of the idea which later developed into the modern garden city.

The idea lay dormant for many years. Only in one or two places, Bath in England and Nancy in France, was planning undertaken. It was a chocolate manufacturer who realized the need for decent homes for working men and women; and George Cadbury in 1879 started Bournville near Birmingham in England, a city whose slums had been and are still notorious. Port Sunlight near Liverpool was built for workers in a soap factory.

These were individual endeavors to satisfy a special need. It was Sir Ebenezer Howard in his book, *Tomorrow*, who conceived the garden city lying outside the boundaries of a metropolis and complete in itself; as a result of this work, Welwyn and Letchworth were created. As self-contained communities they are notable. But, of course, they do not offer a direct solution of the immediate problems arising out of slums in large cities.

Dame Henrietta O. Barnett worked for years in the East End of London in an attempt to bring the poor east and the rich west together in a mutual understanding. Out of her labors grew the neighborhood community idea where men and women of all ranks of life, of all ages, can live together in a common community, with an abundance of the glories of nature and outdoor life surrounding their homes. In this she was ably assisted by Sir Raymond Unwin. In developing the general plan of the Hampstead Garden

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Suburb, Sir Raymond provided that each resident, however rich, however poor, should have his own garden.

For a time, the War stopped the housing movement in Britain. But out of the horrors of that upheaval developed a stronger consciousness of the need for improved living conditions. The pre-War jerry-builders who had supplied poor imitations of planned communities, were replaced by housing authorities, now well over seventeen hundred in number, which are building homes for the poorest families and which yield a three and one-half per cent income on invested capital.

Despite a general lack of progressive planning in the United States, there were interested groups who studied developments abroad and there were honest endeavors to develop the ideal community. Forest Hills was one of the first but it failed in its original purpose of providing homes for the poorer people. The idea was unique; it became popular; and soon it changed into a rich man's town. Nor must we forget Pullman City and Gary, towns which were built for the same purposes as Bournville and Port Sunlight in England. The War also produced several mushroom communities which were ably planned for the increased workers at many factories. The Armistice, in many cases, prevented their completion, and they remain mere fragments, often devoid of tenants.

Since the War, a group of men and women under the leadership of housing architects have created Sunnyside in Queens, Radburn in New Jersey and Chatham Village near Pittsburg. These suggest various stages in the development of the self-contained neighborhood.

The United States has schools of architecture of which she has reason to be proud. It is, however, significant and regrettable that, as a course of study, planning on a larger scale has been left in the background and relegated to the domain of landscape architecture. Of the many thousands of future architects graduated from these schools, very few received their diplomas with any idea that town planning might be their career. These schools have now to revise these programmes, and, as the new Dean of the School of Architecture at Columbia, Joseph R. Hudnut, points out, the architect of the future must be also a sociologist and an economist. He must study architecture as a service for mankind.

IV

In furtherance of the New Deal better housing schemes were submitted to Washington by many architects and agencies which, on examination by the small band of real experts, could not be approved. It was not enough to take a small specified area and make plans for rebuilding that area. Consideration had to be given to the effect on surrounding properties. A community should make a complete civic survey for analysis before proceeding to develop a programme.

Take the case of Cleveland. There was an attractive plan to rehabilitate a sparsely populated and blighted slum district. The new developments were to occupy *one-fifth the total area*. But on that fifth it was proposed to house *the entire population of the whole area*. It would have meant a complete exodus of people from the other four-fifths of the land for which there would be no obvious use either residential or commercial. The land was valued at some eighty to ninety cents a square foot. But

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this value was found to be five times too high and such overvaluation is now the chief obstacle to proper housing for the poorer population. There is thus a need of local legislation creating municipal housing authorities with powers to take over a blighted area at a reasonable value. Failing such powers, slums—for instance, parts of New York's East Side—can never be replaced.

We have to face a plain issue. A man may own a piece of property, but has he or has he not the right to erect thereon a structure which is going to harm his neighbors? A poorly designed, inadequate building is just as much a public nuisance as a vicious dog. If such a structure destroys a whole section, does there not seem to be a reasonable community right that there should be restrictive regulation preventing the erection of unsuitable buildings? This issue dominates the policy of planning and replanning communities. It is implied in the original draft of the proposed National Housing Act.

It has been our habit to assume that slum clearance could be left to take care of itself. It would follow—so we believed—as a matter of course from the increase in the size of the community. The outer ring of residences would spread over a wider and wider periphery. The inner commercial centre would gradually absorb the property that had depreciated upon the inner circumference of the residential area. No special control by the state was necessary. To a certain extent this *laissez-faire*, especially in a new community, met the needs of the situation. But when the skyscraper came, it destroyed the scheme of things. By concentrating business upon a small site, the skyscraper stopped its spread. The blighted zone was bereft of commercial absorption and it became chronic.

An automobile, when it deteriorates, can be sent to the junk heap. It does not depreciate the roads. But a building, whether it be residential or commercial, is fixed to its site. If it crumbles, its location suffers, and this is what town planners describe as "blight."

Often the "individual initiative" which created the original building allows the same building to decay. In cities such as Philadelphia and Cleveland, the older areas, which also had become the poorer areas, became derelict. Within these areas rents fell to a vanishing point and lack of revenue eliminated any possibility of repairing or rebuilding by private initiative.

During the era of prosperity, the nation, following a policy of "let George do it" did little to ameliorate the situation. While spending billions for overexpansion of factories and business, it invested scarcely a cent in decent and well-planned homes for the poorer people. In Philadelphia, nothing was built for the fifty per cent of the lowest income groups of the population. The bulk of new construction went into homes that could be afforded by only fifteen per cent of the population. It meant overbuilding for the well-to-do, with much loss of capital and expensive selling overhead for a glutted market. It meant that the poorer people had either to spend far too great a proportion of their earnings for rent, or else live in hovels.

During the depression, the plight of the slum and blighted areas has been intensified. Extreme poverty, for in 1932 sixty per cent of wage earners received less than $1,000, has meant doubling and tripling of families in apartments and tenements, while other

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

property has been completely vacated. Both conditions are bad.

New York City has recently completed a slum clearance survey. Out of the findings produced by the committee in charge of the work, a sad picture is presented of this, the largest community in the world. It is estimated that two million persons live in old-law tenements whose design was condemned at the beginning of the century. To rehouse this population will take over $1,000,000,000, and this will only remove the worst conditions. To rehouse New York City properly will require two and a half billions of dollars!

V

What we have now to work out is a practical policy, and sometimes we might almost be inclined to hand over the whole business to a benevolent—or even a malevolent—autocrat! It was the smell of the slums under the Palatine Hill and their obstruction to business that appear to have been factors in the pyromania of the Emperor Nero. Many a city has been purged by fire. In Paris a hay barge caught alight and was allowed to drift down the Seine until it jammed under a bridge and thus started a general conflagration. London's plague-swept houses disappeared in the famous fire of 1666. In the United States the construction of buildings of deplorably flimsy materials which rapidly deteriorate has led to much the same experience. In her early history, New York suffered from a serious conflagration. Boston, Salem, Baltimore, Chicago have all been swept by the devouring flames. San Francisco was utterly destroyed first by earthquake and then by fire. In every case acres of slum areas were eliminated.

First among the possibilities of a practical policy is reclamation—which means a better use of the homes already in existence. Many buildings can be kept in repair, modern improvements can be installed, and the original life of the structure considerably extended. The fact that there are buildings in Europe, here and there, that were old five hundred years ago and are still in use today, is proof of this. Such a policy of conservation has been pursued in a few centres in the United States, such as Salem, Massachusetts, and it shows that deterioration, if properly dealt with, is not always an insurmountable evil. In the proposed National Housing Act, reclamation is among the major proposals. Small sums of money wisely expended on structural restoration will, it is hoped, raise many homes to a higher level of decency and comfort. Sometimes, the need is merely for a coat of protective paint. An all too high percentage require adequate sanitation.

Secondly, there is the surgical operation known as slum clearance. It means simply what the phrase implies—the removal of all structures from a condemned area, which thus becomes a new site, ready for properly planned and constructed homes. During the clearance of an area, there should be a reasonable arrangement for the immediate rehousing of the families affected within the district where they have been living and, in many cases, will still want to live.

Thirdly, we have the planning of new housing which will be worthy of modern civilization. The redevelopment of a city block as a unit is not sufficient. It is agreed by experts that the unit should be the area served by the grade school.

A planned area includes more than

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

homes. Provision must be made for stores, for recreation, for religious observance, for education, for streets and transportation. The rentals of the homes must be suited, not merely to families of a hypothetical means. We must consider what are the incomes actually paid.

The opportunity for city planning is today obvious. It has ceased to be an ideal, and is now an urgent necessity. It is for the profession of architecture to make up its mind as to what it means by planned housing. There has been a good deal of academic theorizing. The time has now come for applying theories to actual conditions.

The broad fact is that, in normal times, the United States requires 400,000 new houses every year. These houses are needed first to replace dwellings that have depreciated below the standard of health and decency; secondly, they are required for the increase in population. Yet since the depression, the construction of houses has fallen to ten per cent of normal, and a shortage of accommodation is imminent. We must not forget that the six and one-half per cent of families who have "doubled up" because of unemployment will demand individual homes as prosperity returns.

The National Housing Act means that the problem must be solved, not as private speculation, but as social cooperation. New questions must be asked. Is there sufficient outdoor recreation available for young and old for each home? In what location has the school been placed? Is it to be necessary in future for children—often mere infants—to cross busy highways on their way to and from school and play? Should mothers be under the necessity of crossing traffic-crowded streets when, accompanied by the baby carriage, they undertake their daily marketing?

It is with such thoughts in mind that experts in community housing have devoted their lives to a crusade for essential national upbuilding. If the United States follows their leadership she may yet realize the dreams of those who, full of hope, crossed the ocean to these shores in search of a better way of life.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OHIO

Plebiscite Puzzle in the Saar

By Gerhard Hirschfeld

The Saarlanders are torn between racial loyalty and economic advantage, and their choice is another factor in the troubled peace of Europe

The Saar is not a problem to the Nazis. They follow a simple line of reasoning which runs about like this: the Saar is German (which is correct); Germany is Nazi (which is also correct); hence the Saar is Nazi—and this is distinctly wrong. The Saar has problems all of its own, and if the present masters of Germany fail to recognize them, they may be faced with a *fait accompli* of serious political consequences. The problem involved in the Saar plebiscite, fixed by the League of Nations for January 13, 1935, is much graver than would ordinarily be implied by a simple electoral process. The balance of power in Europe, now hanging by a very fine and very delicate thread, may easily be affected, not by the outcome of the plebiscite, which, everybody admits, will see the Saar's return to the Fatherland, but by the difficulty of adjusting the Saar's economy to that of the Reich.

For while it is true that the Saar is German through and through, it is also true that the Saarländer does not make his living from Germany alone, but also from France; some even go so far as to assert that, from an economic point of view, the Saar could exist without Germany, but not without France. This may be exaggerating the issue, but it at least seems clear that, while the racial and political issues favor the German side, when it comes to the economic aspects there are certain French interests which demand consideration. It is this "partnership" of the two powers in the tiny Saar district which may provide the fireworks sometime in the future. It is the fact that almost-forgotten issues of the past, of the War and of the Armistice are dragged out again into the merciless light of political reality which makes this more than "just a plebiscite."

The Saar is and always has been German. But when twenty years ago the German armies invaded northern France, they thought it advisable to adhere to the ancient war custom of destroying the enemy's resources within their reach. This they did by putting the French coal mines out of commission. In doing so they did not figure on losing the war, of course. So when the time came to add up the losses, the Germans were forced to return Alsace-Lorraine to France, which was also given the exclusive rights of exploita-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion of the coal mines in the Saar Basin, in compensation for the previously destroyed French mines. France became the owner of the mining fields and concessions, the value of which was credited to Germany on the reparations account.

Now it happens that the prosperity of the Saar is derived from coal and iron. The chief market for her coal is Germany, and the chief source of supply for her iron industries is Alsace-Lorraine. As long as these two provinces were part of Germany, the Saar fitted in nicely enough. She obtained her supplies from one part of Germany, and sold her products to a considerable extent in another part of Germany. This well-balanced economic situation was changed when Alsace-Lorraine with her iron ore mines fell to France in 1919, and when an impoverished Germany could not give the Saar industries quite the same market they had enjoyed in pre-War days. In addition, France went out of her way to help the Saar reorientate her economy more in line with French ambitions. Trade and tariff obstacles were removed, French capital poured into the Saar Basin, French industries placed large orders and, on the other hand, supplied large quantities of ores, all of which contributed to making the Saar reasonably prosperous.

To what extent the economic character of the Saar has turned from German to French may be seen from the fact that Germany absorbed back in 1913 about 4,718,000 tons of Saar coal, and France 2,670,600 tons. Twenty years later, the German figure had dropped to 948,000 tons, while the French figure had risen to 3,980,000 tons. The sale of steel mill products to Germany amounted in 1913 to seventy per cent of total sales; in 1933 it had dropped to thirty-five per cent, or exactly half. In contrast, sales of these products to France rose within the same period from fourteen to thirty-one per cent of total sales.

In other countries, steel and coal may be important items in the national economy, but in the Saar they are more than just that. They furnish everything —food, clothing and shelter—for virtually the entire population of 828,000. Almost one-half of this number are engaged in the mining or manufacturing end of iron and coal. It is, therefore, essential for the Saarländers to know just how the plebiscite is going to affect the sales possibilities for their coal and the supply of iron ore needed for the manufacture of steel products. The iron ore they obtained from Lorraine when it was German; now they obtain it also from Lorraine even though it is French. And in the future they want it from the same Lorraine regardless of whether it is German or French or anything else.

Not so with the two rivals. The French say: "If you vote for Germany, we shall stop ore shipments from Lorraine." It is an open question, however, whether France will not think twice before losing a customer who takes three million tons of ore every year, or nearly ten per cent of the Lorraine output. The Germans, again, say: "Why bother about the French ore? Don't you have stocks right here in the Saar? And if they are exhausted, you can buy Swedish and Canadian ores, which, because of currency devaluation, are cheaper by fifty per cent today than they were in 1929. Finally, our German ores can be treated for your purposes in such a way that they can take the place of French ores."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

II

And so the arguments go, back and forth, emphasizing or discounting, as the case may be, the advantages of staying with France or of returning to Germany. One fact, however, seems to stand out: if the Saar goes back to the Reich, it will be the first time since the Franco-Prussian War that it finds itself outside of the territorial area of Alsace-Lorraine, which has given it its importance. There will be a tariff line between the Saar and France; there will be all sorts of obstacles in the way of placing Saar coal on the French market, of getting iron ore across the border, of selling mill products, of finding customers for a number of other products made in the Saar, for instance, machines, technical apparatus, vehicles, glass, brick, cement and many others.

Where would the people of the Saar find a substitute for the French trade lost by import restrictions, tariffs, quota systems and the like? Germany has announced through von Papen, Goebbels and Hitler himself that ample care would be taken of any losses which the Saar may suffer in consequence of a pro-German plebiscite. Railroad rates would be reduced so as to facilitate the exchange of goods. Unemployment (amounting to about 40,000 in the Saar Valley) would be eliminated; the splendid results of the German campaign against unemployment are offered as proof of this contention. Orders would be placed by the German heavy industries. French capital would be replaced by German funds. Coal and steel production would be stepped up, and full and unspoiled prosperity would be but a matter of months.

It does not fall within the scope of this article to discuss in detail just how Germany would do all this. After all, she is beset by difficulties of her own. Employment is created, true enough; but in many cases it does not seem to pay much more than the minimum of unemployment insurance; in many cases, it is a sort of "militarized" work, in labor camps, on roads and in the fields. The financial difficulties of the Reichsbank at the time I am writing are well enough known to throw doubt on the efficacy of large-scale financing in the Saar. Finally, the coal and steel producers along the Rhine and Ruhr will not be so enthusiastic about the incorporation of the Saar industries in the Reich, for they are competing with each other. Besides, the Ruhr coal is better in quality than the Saar coal and has, furthermore, the advantage of cheaper freight. The Saar has been promised a nice, brand-new canal to the Rhine, but the same promise was made at the beginning of the century. It was never carried out because the coal producers along the Ruhr objected. Will the Nazis be able to overrule that objection?

Then, there are many smaller industries such as the breweries, the boot and shoe industry, the furniture industry and a number of others which have grown up during the last fifteen years behind French tariff walls. They supply the specifically German needs of the Saar population which can not be supplied by France. But once the tariff walls are eliminated, will they be strong enough to compete with powerful German large-scale production? While the Nazis profess particular sympathies for the small trader, they have not shown so far any leanings toward the small producers at the expense of the large interests in their own

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

country. If they can do no better in the Saar, the chances are that most of these small industries will be forced to close down.

III

From this picture of economic conditions one may easily judge the thoughts and sentiment of the people in the Saar Valley. They are German, they feel German, they speak German. But so many things have happened since the Versailles Treaty. While in years past they have been looking toward the east with anxiety and hopefulness for their reunion with the Fatherland, the daily worries of making a living have not blinded their eyes to existing realities. They have looked toward the east, but they have taken advantage of business opportunities in the west. They have clamored for German possession of the Saar, but meanwhile they have built their future to a good extent upon French coöperation.

Now they are forced with this dilemma. Should they vote for France, for Germany or for the *status quo* under the patronage of the League of Nations? They probably do not know themselves. Before the advent of Hitler, it was reasonably certain that at least ninety per cent of the Saar population would vote for reunion with Germany. Now estimates vary. The Nazis claim ninety-nine per cent, no more and no less. The Social Democrats do not concede more than forty per cent. The truth lies probably somewhere between. If left entirely alone, the people might vote for the continuation of the present status. But the Nazis have devoted time and money, have called out the storm troops and have shipped the silver tongues of their persuasive leaders to the cities and towns of the Saar to see that the plebiscite effects the return to the mother country.

They have worked in their approved style. Persecution and propaganda have played their part. In recent speeches, Herr von Papen went out of his way to point out that, if the plebiscite brought a "disappointing result," the result would be the Saar's complete economic collapse. He called attention to the annual pension payments, social insurance funds, subsidies for housing, education and other cultural purposes sent in to the territory by the German Government, funds that in the aggregate exceeded the total tax income of the local government. He did not fail to remind his audience that only Germany's willingness to punch her tariff walls full of holes for the benefit of Saar industries kept them above water. He and his colleagues conveniently recalled the fact that about forty per cent of the production of Saar coal mines must be sold outside the French area, and chiefly in Germany. That the other sixty per cent are no less important, he did not say.

All of which tends only to aggravate the plight of the Saarländers. If they turn from Germany, they lose one-half of their markets. If they turn the other way, they may lose the other half, or a valuable portion of it. If they turn nowhere, they challenge the ire of the Nazis. And this is not all. As was said above, before Herr Hitler grew from the "drummer of the revolution" the leading German statesman, it was clear that the people of the Saar would go back where they feel they belong. But Hitler arrived, and freedom went. The persecution of the Catholic part of the German population must have made a deep impression on the people of the Saar, of whom more than two-thirds

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

belong to the Roman Catholic Church. It must have left a deep scar on the patriotism of the working population when they read about the dissolution of German labor unions, about the regimentation of the working class, about the leader principle in every economic branch: in short, about the loss of labor's freedom and its subordination to the interests of the State, according to the tenets of National Socialism. And it is doubtful whether this reaction upon the Catholic and the labor factions of the Saar would not have been enough to swing the tide of voting either in favor of France or of the League protectorate in normal times.

Here the story should end, and it would if only the Saar were concerned. However, the dynamite in the situation and the friction involved in it, will only then come to the surface. It is the issue between Germany and France.

IV

For one thing, there are the stipulations of the plebiscite. The preliminary canvassing and the actual taking of the vote must be carried out free from Nazi pressure and terrorism. Up to now, the atmosphere has been loaded to the extent of open conflagration with both of them. Secondly, those who have the courage to vote against the reincorporation of the Saar into the Reich must enjoy a genuine condonation after the plebiscite. In the past, the Nazis have intimated that any Saarländers will thus have branded themselves as traitors to their country. Unless the Hitlerites change their procedure in the Saar completely, it will be easy for the French to prove German violation of the rules of the plebiscite and to question its validity.

More important in the case of a German victory is the disruption of a territory which is economically interdependent but would then be politically separated and cut into different trade and tariff zones. The triangle of Alsace, Lorraine and the Saar, as was indicated above, is one large industrial and mining unit. They have enjoyed prosperity because they were free to trade and barter within one customs union. Now they are to be parted.

All past wars between Prussia and France have had their cause largely in the possession of the Rhineland as well as of the Rhine River. Later wars between the Reich and France revolved around the possession of Alsace-Lorraine. Now that Germany seems to have resigned herself to the loss of these two provinces, another devil pops up in the Saar Basin, an excellent excuse for a war.

The tension between the two countries is such that any additional friction should be carefully avoided. Unfortunately, the plebiscite comes at a time when the reincorporation of the Saar into the Reich will not make the French more sympathetic toward German rearmament and toward the challenge of National Socialism. On the other hand, it will add to the Reich's difficulties, although it must be admitted that the territorial addition will recompense the Hitler Government for many setbacks at home. But it will add to the church conflict; it will aggravate the labor problem; it will add to the problems of heavy industry; and it will be particularly trying for the Nazi patience in dealing with the French and non-Nazi inhabitants of the Saar Valley.

The plebiscite, instead of solving a delicate problem, will create one that may long be remembered as a worthy remnant of the Treaty of Versailles.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Idealism's Bank Holiday

By Louise Mannsell Field

Who is confident that the War-inspired cynicism of the 'Twenties is disappearing in a resurgence of typically American idealism

Its ideals have always been at once the wealth and the ultimate destiny of a nation. By them and through them it makes its mark upon the world, by them and through them it is remembered long after its rulers, its buildings and even its monuments have become merely so much wind-blown dust. The Greek ideals of beauty, the Persian ideal of truth-speaking, the Roman ideals of fortitude and patriotism still endure in men's memories, an inseparable and the most important part of what we mean when we speak of Greece or Persia or Rome. And of all the nations of the world, past or present, there is none in whose building ideals have played so conspicuous a part as they have done in these United States.

Founded on ideals of freedom, of the equality of all men, rich and poor, before the law, of religious tolerance and a chance for every one of its citizens to pursue his own ideas of happiness so long as the pursuit did not interfere with the rights of others, it began by proclaiming all these to the four quarters of the globe. There was of course nothing new about any one of them. The most difficult to achieve, that of the equality of all men before the law, had been upheld in Egypt as early as the second millennium B.C., and reaffirmed centuries later in Magna Charta. But never before had such a combination been made at once the very cornerstone of a country, and its national creed.

We who are living in this present period of change, turmoil and instability are being besieged and often deafened with talk of the bankruptcy of American along with all other idealisms, implicit and explicit. As far as the United States' own special types are concerned, we are told that the cornerstone is not and never was more than pretense, mere papier-maché and the creed one in which only the sheep-like herd of the stupid ever really believed at all. During the past decade and a half or so it has been the fashion to declare one's self hard-boiled, and to be ashamed not of one's evil but rather of one's good behavior. The new and generally prevalent form of hypocrisy has been an homage paid, not by vice to virtue, but by virtue to vice.

For only by professing a complete disbelief in the very existence of morality or any sort of moral code could

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one prove one's self sophisticated. Husbands and wives who seemed faithful to and even fond of each other must be spoken of as either skilful in deception or the unfortunate victims of regrettable inhibitions. Loyalty to anything or any one must be ridiculed as folly or pretense, unless of course that something or some one had the power to further one's material interests. Romantic love was laughed at as moonshine, and belief in the possibility of its endurance seriously deplored as so much self-delusion, likely to have disastrous consequences, while affection for one's parents was only a lamentable exhibition of infantilism. As for those absurd men and women who manifested an altruistic desire to leave their corner of the world just a little bit better than they found it, they must be treated as possibly fools and probably Pecksniffs, while the poet's declaration that "a man's reach should exceed his grasp," was regarded as applicable, so far as any sensible person was concerned, only to the reaching out for money and yet more money.

Literature was swept along by the current. The leading characters of our fiction not only ceased to be estimable, but even to have sufficient decency to make them fit subjects for ordinary social intercourse. For all our supposedly hard-boiled attitude we would, most of us, have refused to admit into our homes men and women like those we professed to admire when we encountered them in fiction. As for the background against which these wastrels played their parts, it was composed by a careful selection of the worst aspects and incidents of our civilization, and an equally careful ignoring of any that might appear to be an improvement upon the customs and methods of the Stone Age. The stage, as might be expected, followed the lead of the novel as far as its greater limitations would permit, while biography consisted principally in ferreting out and setting down the worst that had been, could and might by any possibility be said of its subject.

II

All this in the period of our supposed material prosperity; when the crash came, with its attendant train of bank failures, business suspensions and besmirched if not totally destroyed reputations, matters of course grew even worse. When men who had been honored as models of probity as well as of successful enterprise proved ethically lower than the worst of the professional crooks, gangsters and racketeers, since these at least ran risks from which the financial potentates believed themselves immune, such belief as was left in human uprightness received a terrific, in many instances an overwhelming, shock. To many it seemed as if the men at the head of most of the larger business and financial enterprises of the United States had been proved totally devoid, not only of honor, but of what we had been accustomed to call common honesty. Those who had not been so proved were, it was felt, probably no better than the others; they had only so far escaped being found out. Then when the Government of the United States repudiated its obligations by refusing to carry out its pledge to pay its debts in gold, it seemed as if the pessimists must indeed be right, and the United States bankrupt in idealism, not only of the special type it had once professed but of every other.

Yet less than twenty years have

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passed since this country was stirred to its very core by questions of loyalty and honor and the sacred duty of keeping a given promise. It is easy now to talk about the financiers and the munitions-makers, easy to talk about propaganda and hysteria as the reasons why the United States first sympathized with, and eventually entered the World War on the side of, the Allies; but the underlying truth is that from the hour Belgium was invaded the idealism of the country was roused. The glaring fact that of all the great powers Germany alone was ready for war to the last man and the last button had an influence far stronger than that of any so-called propaganda. There was alloy mingled, no doubt, with the pure gold of that chivalrous impulse which saw the World War as a new and greater Crusade. Alloy always is so mingled, and in abundance. But it was not self-interest which impelled the greater number of those obscure American women who from the beginning sewed and knit and made bandages for the Allies, giving up, in many instances, leisure that was precious, strength and money they could ill afford. Nor was it self-interest which impelled the greater number of the American men, important and unimportant alike, who worked long hours to help those whose countries had been made desolate, or went over-seas to serve in ambulance corps or to fight for humanity and righteousness. It is easy to sneer today at what they did and their reasons for doing it; to a certain type of mind, sneering is always both pleasant and easy. But behind the restlessness, and desire for change and for adventure which doubtless motivated some of them, lurked something at least of the chivalric impulse.

Never perhaps did American idealism reach a higher pitch than during the World War, both before and after the United States entered the conflict. And it is in the very height and ardor of the self-sacrifice, of the hope for and the belief in the coming of that new and better world, "fit for heroes to live in," which many confidently expected would result from the war to end war, that we should look for the fundamental cause of the half cynical, half despairing attitude which has dominated the succeeding years. During the four years the World War lasted, the best of the American people made tremendous drafts, not only on their material wealth, but also on their store of generosity, of willingness to put self-interest aside, of hope and faith in and for the future, tremendous drafts on all that we sum up in the word, idealism.

They were not alone, of course, in so doing; far from it. But it is only of America that I am writing. Throughout those four years a great many, both men and women, strained every nerve in efforts primarily if not purely altruistic. The slogan, "Give till it hurts," was no mere empty phrase to them but an expression of fact. They gave not only their money, but themselves, working with all the ardor and energy they possessed for the sake of ideals of honor and justice they hoped to see embodied in a new and cleaner world, wherein those who had fought side by side would be united in bonds of good will and good fellowship never to be dissolved. That through selfishness or negligence, indifference or any material considerations whatsoever, faith should be broken with those who lay among the poppies of Flanders field seemed an idea impossible to entertain even for a single moment.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Not all by any means of the men and women in these United States were, it is scarcely necessary to add, influenced by such hopes and faiths, such beliefs and ideas and ideals. But very many were; and these drew tremendously on their reserve as well as on their current accounts in idealism's bank. Drew until it hurt.

For it was their subsequent weariness and disappointment which did more than anything else to bring about the still extant bank holiday in idealism.

Enthusiastic as they were, they had set not merely their hopes, but also their expectations too high. They had forgotten that war drains not only the best blood but also the mental and moral strength of a nation; forgotten too that human nature acts very like a pendulum, swinging from one extreme to the other. Only a very few can breathe the rarefied air of the spiritual heights in comfort for any length of time; the majority soon find a return to ordinary ground desirable.

III

We all know the sorry story of the post-War Jazz Period, when the very intensity of relief from a strain become unendurable, the very cessation, or apparent cessation, of the need for self-abnegation set the nation to dancing and drinking, while what seemed to be the easiest kind of easy money encouraged a veritable orgy of spending and speculation. Meanwhile a new generation was growing up, a generation surrounded, taught and influenced by those who had had a great faith and seen it blighted, who had had high hopes and seen them destroyed, who had had magnificent ideals and seen them degraded into laughing-stocks. No wonder those who grew up during the post-War period, in an atmosphere of disappointment and disillusionment, materialism, cynicism, pessimism, should have adopted, "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die," as their motto and code of conduct. Where they made their mistake was in fancying that they were the first to do so, the first to ridicule and despise the ideas and ideals of their immediate predecessors.

They were sufferers from an inevitable reaction, sufferers from the poverty resulting from an overdraft on American idealism. They came to maturity at a time when the once abundant reserve was depleted so far that there was not enough left even for the requirements of every-day living. The very words which had expressed its point of view had become shorn of their beauty and authority, had degenerated into terms of implicit ridicule, which no intelligent person could speak or write save with tongue in cheek.

And not only was the general capital depleted, but paradoxically enough, yet necessarily too, the very men and women who had once had the largest share of such wealth were often the ones who now had the least. For it was of course those who had had the highest hopes and held them the most firmly who suffered the greatest disappointment. Idealism's one-time millionaires too frequently became its paupers. Their impoverishment affected the entire country. The callous indifference with which the nation at large treated such scandals as those of the Harding Administration and the Seabury investigation, to mention only a few, an indifference which seemed the very negation, not only of idealism, but of any shadow of moral courage or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moral sense, was in great part due to this very impoverishment of those who should have been the first to come forward, who should have quickened and led the sorely needed popular indignation through their own example and response; for idealism of some sort is the very first requisite of a genuine leader.

Then as if to annihilate any chance whatsoever of a spiritual recovery which might little by little have restocked the depleted treasury and made good the overdrafts, came the business and financial smash-up, euphemistically called the depression, with its subsequent revelations of theft and chicanery in high places, of financial immorality, of trust violated and confidence betrayed as a matter of routine, of men who had been relied upon, respected and admired threatened by jail, or saved therefrom either by their adroitness in so utilizing legal loopholes that they kept themselves and their doings safe within the letter of the law, or by the fact that their malfeasance had been on a scale so gigantic that any attempt to punish them would result only in producing new sufferers, as well as in further injuring those already victimized. Great corporations whose very names were as so many synonyms for security proved honeycombed with fraud. Confidence vanished. Who could be trusted, since these were proved untrustworthy?

Where, amid such a debacle, was any foothold for idealism to be found?

Religion, as represented by the organized churches, proved totally ineffective in its efforts, usually feeble, to cope with the situation; partly because its influence had long since sunk so low it did not count for a very great deal. Science had become in the minds of many only another name for long-range guns, submarines, high explosives and poison gas, while its ideal of truth-seeking had small chance of making any strong appeal to a generation trained to shrug its shoulders indifferently and demand, "What is Truth?" Literature, far from even endeavoring to prospect for fresh gold with which to replace the diminished, all but vanished reserves, gave its powerful assistance principally to those who insisted that the supposed gold had never been a really precious metal at all, but only worthless tinsel, or at best, fairy gold, bound to disappear overnight. Biography and fiction alike proclaimed, not the long-established truism that, "All that glitters is not gold," but a new dogma, asserting that whatever happens to shine most brightly will most surely and unquestionably prove but worthless brass.

IV

Is the United States, then, permanently bankrupt in idealism? Or has it merely shut up shop for a while, declaring a kind of bank holiday? Will the temporarily exhausted stock of that most precious possession eventually be replenished, and solvency be attained once more?

I for one say yes. A period of suspension we have, most unfortunately, a wearisome period out of which we have not yet emerged, though already there are indications, a very few of them, that the end may at last be coming in sight. For one thing, our popular fiction and biography are changing their tone; once more writers are occasionally permitting themselves the long-abandoned luxury of depicting characters, real or imaginary, towards whom they can feel some degree of liking at

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

least, and sometimes even of enthusiasm. These admired characters belong, it is true, more often to the past than to the present, but at least the willingness to admire, the ability to be enthusiastic, are manifesting themselves once more, as well as gaining strength by force of repetition and example. On the stage, one of the longest-running, most successful productions of the season was a drama of triumphant idealism and of consecration to an ideal, Sidney Kingsley's *Men In White*, which despite certain obvious flaws not only won but deserved the Pulitzer Prize.

Perhaps the first definite symptoms of revival showed themselves in that political field regarding which expectations are seldom very high, and appeared on that memorable fourth of March when a new President took the oath of office. Mr. Roosevelt's accession was unquestionably greeted by many with the feeling that things were already so bad they couldn't be very much worse and might quite possibly be improved, since almost any change would have an excellent chance of being a change for the better; but there was also a genuine response to the challenge of his inaugural address. To how great an extent that response has since died away, opinions differ; but that it did exist, there can be no smallest doubt.

Taken all together, these indications of a possible, eventual release of our frozen assets of idealism, a possible restoration of our depleted stock, are as yet very few; and some even of those few may prove fallacious. Fortunately, the reason which justifies expectation that the overdrawn account will one day be fully restored rests, not on any of these, but on the broadest and strongest of foundations; the spirit of the American people itself.

As a nation we are, and always have been, essentially and instinctively courageous. And with national courage we combine that especial type of discontent which always believes, not only in the possibility of making things better than they are, but also in its own ability to make them better. These characteristics of ours may lie dormant, even apparently moribund for a time, but they are bound to revive again, and that without any very great delay, or especially powerful extraneous influence exerted in their behalf.

But for their inherent courage, their craving for betterment, the first small companies of would-be settlers would never have ventured to cross the ocean; but for their inherent courage, their restlessness under conditions they believed unjust, and confidence in their own power to right them, the little group of Colonies never would have ventured to declare their independence, nor the pioneers gone forth to establish new homes in the wilderness, homes they were resolved should be an improvement on those they left. From its inception, our history is a story of courage confronting difficulties, often without any compulsion save that arising from its own beliefs and aspirations. Whatever else the immigrants who have come to us from other countries may have brought or have failed to bring with them, at least they invariably came possessed of their own abundant stock of courage. They had, too, not only a desire for, but a great confidence in the possibility of, bettering themselves and their children here in this new world, often materially, sometimes mentally and spiritually. But whether their aims were high or

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

low, without courage and a restless longing for improvement, they never would have attempted to carry them into effect. Thus they tended to strengthen characteristics already dominant, so that whatever faults we as a nation may have, cowardice is not one of them, nor is any supine yielding to circumstances.

Yet these qualities of ours unquestionably have their drawbacks, some of them serious ones. Often they blind us to facts, as in the foolish waste of our public school system, with its enormously expensive and largely futile attempts to educate the uneducatable, and in our perhaps even more foolish confidence in the excellence of so-called universal suffrage. Not infrequently, moreover, they induce us to regard whatever is new or different as necessarily an improvement on whatever is old or familiar, especially if the new have any tinge of the adventurous or even of the showy, like our once much-vaunted "tallest buildings." On occasion they have even betrayed us into an attempt to instruct other nations in the way they should go, or rather that we think they should go, with of course unpleasant results, nations, like individuals, having an intense objection to being lectured. But far more often they have stood us not merely in good but in magnificent stead, enabling us to conquer enormous difficulties, leading us to dare greatly in our refusal to submit to what others might quite reasonably consider the insuperable or the inevitable. And in this courage, this fine type of a restless discontent, whose very keynote is a gallant denial of any passive or easy acceptance of things as they are, lies the root of our national idealism, which will surely flower from it once more.

The long, hard winter of disappointment and discouragement and loss of confidence through which we have passed and are still passing, has frozen the blossoms and nipped the buds, but though so much of the visible part of the plant has blackened and withered, its root remains. From that root it must and will some day arise again, finer, stronger and more splendid than of old.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE LITERARY LANDSCAPE

by

HERSCHEL BRICKELL

A DISTINGUISHED meteorologist took a look at his record of sun-spot cycles sometime last spring and made the bold prophecy that this would be a year without a summer. Publishers, trusting souls that they are, arranged their affairs accordingly and instead of getting together lists of light fiction, as is their custom, decided to bring out instead some of the best of the year's novels, and also some of the most difficult.

The Landscaper is by no means sure that this theory will hold water; it is merely his way of explaining an unusual phenomenon, the appearance of several very fine books that are about as far away from the silly season as could be imagined. So here we are with hot weather—in Haddonfield, New Jersey, where this is being written the sun gives no evidence of illness, and the birds and the flowers are doing their best to confute gloomy prophecies of the approach of another Ice Age.

Actually there has never been any very good reason why people who like good books should not have them in the summer as well as any other time. The Landscaper remembers very well reading Santayana on the sand dunes of Bermuda's Elbow Beach, with a fine hot sun doing its best to bake the landscape, and feeling that he came nearer to grasping the thought of this great philosopher and great master of prose than at any other time during a long acquaintance. So it can be done, although the novels that are about to be spoken of do not have to be read now; for those who like to do their thinking in cool weather, these are books that will still be worth reading later. In fact, no matter what the coming autumn season brings forth these are books that will not be surpassed.

A Poem of Mankind

One of the most difficult, most mind-stretching of the lot, is Thomas Mann's *Joseph and His Brothers* (Knopf, $2.50), the first volume of a trilogy that has for its magnificent theme the symbolical history of the human race. It is the belief of the German novelist that there is a central unity in the affairs of men, that the patterns of history and of individuals tend to repeat themselves. The outline of his poem, for poem it is, he draws in a prelude in this first volume; he takes his reader by the hand and shows him his conception of the dark backward and abysm of time. The style is complicated, some of the sentences a page or more long, and there are overtones of philosophical

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

thinking that make slow and repeated readings obligatory.

The plan out of the way, we are introduced to the young Joseph, seated in the moonlight at a well paying his tribute to the moon-goddess. His father Jacob comes along and is somewhat surprised at this pagan business. There follows a long discussion of the demi-gods of the ancient world, which is a history of early religions; Joseph himself is identified with the sun-god. Osiris, Adonai, Apollo and even the sun-god of the Mayas, slip into and out of each other, and the conception becomes larger, and to put it quite frankly, harder to grasp.

But this is followed by a re-telling of the story of Jacob from Genesis, which is beautifully done, and at the same time full of significance. It is the easiest part of the book because of the emphasis on the story-element and because we are on familiar ground. Jacob, Isaac and Abraham are identified; there is a constant similarity of personality among these patriarchs which is a key to the book, for they are not only like each other, but like all men. The symbolism is simpler and more obvious, and when the book is finished much that was dark while it was being read is suddenly illuminated, and one lays the book aside with the mental muscles fatigued, but with the greatest eagerness to continue the journey.

Perhaps His Greatest

Admirers of Thomas Mann's other books, including his two great novels, *Buddenbrooks* and *The Magic Mountain*, will find the present work much harder to read, but the chances are that it will easily take rank with what has gone before, and may indeed, although it can not have the popularity of the earlier books, turn out to be the finest thing he has ever done. So here is something for a vacation if you feel like intellectual exercise.

It should go into the record that the author was in New York for the publication of his book, and that his very brief stay of ten days won him the affection of many people who had long admired and respected him through his books. He is a voluntary exile from Hitler's Germany, which is, the Landscaper thinks, one of the most severe condemnations of the Nazis on record. He is a man of profound simplicity and dignity, and at the same time of a great deal of warmth and kindliness; in other words, one of those rare authors who lives up to his books. For those who do not yet know him, his book of short stories, *Death in Venice*, is a splendid introduction, simpler and easier to read than his novels, but so clearly marked with genius that it will almost certainly make any one wish to know more of him and his writings.

There Is No Answer

Evelyn Scott's *Breathe Upon These Slain* (Smith and Haas, $2.50) is another of the recent novels that is definitely intellectual, which has, in other words, something to say, and which lives in the memory not only as a fine piece of fiction, but a valuable effort to think about our times, and to help to orient us with the world we live in and with the universe. Mrs. Scott's long list of novels includes none more pleasant to read than the present work, which, for all the thought that has gone into it, is done gracefully and skilfully, and which has some characters, particularly, that are both individual and typical; portraits executed with the hand of a master.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For her device, Mrs. Scott has chosen to bring to life a Victorian family whose pictures she sees on the walls of an English cottage. She writes the story in the first person, and takes the reader into the laboratory of a novelist's mind, speculating aloud as to whether she is right about her people, but nevertheless getting on with their story, which is also a story of an epoch. It runs down to our own time; on the one hand the hard outlines of Victorian thought, on the other, the equally hard outlines of the Marxian conception of everything. Mrs. Scott does not believe there are final answers to human problems; she offers no ready solutions and escapes into no formulæ. But there is a humanity in her book that is better than the Complete Answer, an intellectual honesty that is refreshing in a world full of people who do not know enough of history to realize that the race and its problems can not and will not be neatly pigeonholed.

Some reviewers have written of this book that it belongs to Mrs. Scott's minor work, but the Landscaper suspects that they were deceived by its grace; it is a novel of enduring value, much less difficult to read than such books as *The Wave* or *The Calendar of Sin*. There can be no doubt any longer that this novelist belongs to the small group of first-rate people in America who are serious artists and who have sufficient spiritual resources to make them the proper company for thoughtful people.

Rome Redivivus

The third novel of this group is a brilliant *tour de force* by Robert Graves, an Englishman of talent who has surpassed himself in the present work. The title is *I, Claudius* (Smith and Haas, $3), and the book is a fictional autobiography of the member of the Julio-Claudine dynasty who married Messalina and succeeded Caligula, becoming one of the greatest of the Roman Emperors. Mr. Graves has imagined Claudius, who suffered from physical defects that made him a sort of clown at court, as writing his history of himself and his times in Greek, and has imitated what might have been his simple, homely and roundabout style. This, together with the difficulty of keeping dynastic matters straight, unless, of course, one has just boned up on Tacitus and Seutonius, does not make for the easiest reading in the world, but the effort is made worth while by the vitality of the study of Claudius, and the contemporary's eye-view of one of the most colorful periods in all Roman history.

Of Claudius's own characters, Livia, his grandmother, whom he makes out a poisoner of the first order, a thoroughly unscrupulous but very intelligent woman who lets nothing stand in the way of her ambitions for her family, emerges as the most interesting and most thoroughly drawn of the lot. The story ends as Claudius is made Emperor; his thoughts at the moment are not of the glory of Rome, but of the fact that in future people will have to read his books. This is a most impressive example of the historical novel at its best, and Mr. Graves has promised to carry on the story in a sequel, which a lot of us will await with eagerness.

The Stribling Trilogy

Among other recent books that have attracted attention is the conclusion of T. S. Stribling's trilogy, of which *The Store* and *The Forge* were the earlier volumes. The new book is called *Unfinished Cathedral* (Doubleday, Doran,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

$2.50), and deals with the contemporary South in the satirical manner of the earlier novels. It is a definitely inferior book to the others, and not a very good novel on any count, melodramatic to a degree, almost wholly journalistic in its incidents, and badly written even for Mr. Stribling, which is saying a good deal, because whatever other qualities he may have, mastery of the language is not among his possessions. He is, to be brutal, both tone-deaf and without taste, and there is no chance for a good style in such circumstances.

As for the validity of the trilogy, the Landscaper's objection to it is that Mr. Stribling has either made no effort to understand the South or is incapable of seeing it from any other angle except his own. A measure of his unfairness may be seen in his transfer of the Scottsboro case to Florence, Alabama, which he also makes a boom-town, and a place of echoes of the Dayton, Tennessee affair.

One reviewer said he had crowded the melodrama of the last ten years into one novel; he has also distorted the picture by making one town the scene of a number of scattered and unpleasant incidents. This is neither art nor life. A good deal of nonsense has been written about the trilogy merely because it is a trilogy, as if the choice of a broad canvas were of equal importance with what was finally painted upon it, and how well painted. Perhaps this nonsense has made the Landscaper unduly severe on Mr. Stribling, who is not responsible, of course, for what reviewers may say of his work, but it is very hard not to become annoyed over the glorification of the second-rate. And this author has the consolation of Pulitzer Prizes and Book Club choices to soothe any stings from critical barbs. . . .

Other Good Novels

Other recent novels that are worthy of attention include such books as Nine Warner Hooke's *Striplings* (Dutton), a remarkable first novel about two perfectly natural children who are disgusting brats and fascinating young human beings at the same time; *Lift Up to Glory*, by the anonymous author of *This Bright Summer* (Covici-Friede, $2.50), a realistic and honest book about Vermont hill people, done with sufficient skill to make one wonder why the novelist does not emerge from cover; Beatrix Lehmann's *Rumour of Heaven* (Morrow, $2.50), a fantastic and admirably done first novel by the sister of Rosamond Lehmann, which is concerned with the odd family of a crazy Russian dancer—it does not resemble the work of the author's talented sister, but is both original and very promising; and Ilya Ehrenbourg's *Out of Chaos* (Holt, $2.50), a novel of contemporary Russia by one of the exiles who lives in Paris and is therefore able to present both sides of the picture of life under the Soviets. It is a cinematic study of the building of a great steel mill, with a running contrast of the New and the Old, in which the lesson seems to be that the rootless ones who never knew the culture of Old Russia are better off than the intellectuals, that is to say, the people who believe in a New Heaven and a New Earth are better off than the cynical, and certainly much happier during the period of construction.

Knut Hamsun's *The Road Leads On* (Coward-McCann, $3), carries on the familiar story of Segelfoss, and draws together all the Nordland novels that have given so many readers pleasure. It has the good qualities of Hamsun's previous works—at seventy-four his hand

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has lost none of its cunning—and its more than five hundred pages ought to provide a summer's reading for people who are not in a hurry.

A Novel of Action

Readers in search of a story, an old-style novel crammed with incident, and with a charming, virginal and just-wanton-enough heroine, a hero who could lick any man in a fair or foul fight, and a black villain, will find just what they want in Neil Swanson's *The Phantom Emperor* (Putnam, $2.50), a book based upon an historical incident of the 'Thirties, when a certain man planned to set up an empire in the American Southwest, make himself head of the Indians, and build up a nation within a nation. Mr. Swanson has made a careful study of all the documentary material available, and has gone over the route followed by the expedition which actually set out from Buffalo on its way to Santa Fé. He has taken liberties with the people involved, but there is some of the charm of actuality about his picture of the times, and excitement aplenty in every chapter. In other words, a good romantic novel, up to the high standard of his earlier book, *The Judas Tree*. This one ought to be prime summer reading, as the people in it very nearly freeze to death through one bitter winter.

Also recommended: Grace Flandrau's *Indeed This Flesh* (Smith and Haas, $2.50), a fine study of a man's life against the background of boom-time St. Paul, in which Mrs. Flandrau shows an amazing knowledge of masculine psychology, as well as of the Victorian period.

The worst novel of the past few weeks, mentioned here only because its author can and should do better work, is John Erskine's *Bachelor—of Arts* (Bobbs-Merrill, $2), which is a story of Columbia University student-life that reflects no credit on either Morningside Heights or the man who wrote it. It is, in other words, trash, and not even very high-grade trash.

The Communist Utopia

One of the most interesting and important books of non-fiction of recent weeks is Tatiana Tchernavin's *Escape from the Soviets* (Dutton, $2.50), a first-hand account of what has happened in Russia to certain intellectuals under the "liquidation" policy of the Soviets, which is a remarkable revelation of the stupidity and brutality of the OGPU, or secret police. Madame Tchernavin and her husband were trapped in the Revolution, but felt because of their willingness to work with the new government that nothing would happen to them. They were both imprisoned on no definite charges, snatched away from their small son, and subjected to all kinds of cruelty in addition to their mental anguish. At last the husband, who had been a teacher—his wife worked in various museums under the Soviet régime after the Revolution—found himself in a prison camp near enough to the Finnish border to make escape seem possible, and the little family set out to get away from the Communist paradise.

The story of their flight is moving almost beyond endurance, and the child emerges as one of the bravest and most attractive youngsters ever to find himself between the covers of a book. They did escape, after incredible hardships, and are now living in Paris. As a human document this book stands alone; it has the validity of something absolutely first-hand, obviously unexaggerated, and good both as literature and as a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

revealing commentary upon some phases of life in the "country of the future" about which we who live in downtrodden capitalist countries hear so much. At this writing, it is a best-seller, which it richly deserves to be; there have been few books this year more deserving of attention.

Far-away Places

Two fine records of life in distant parts of the world are Melville and Frances Herskovits's *Rebel Destiny* (Whittlesey House, $3), a study of Negroes in Dutch Guiana who escaped from slavery and fled into the bush, there to set up their own civilization, and George Gaylord Simpson's *Attending Marvels: A Patagonian Journal* (Macmillan, $3), the account of a paleontologist's stay in that odd country that lies at the tip-end of South America. The Herskovitses found invaluable material in the jungle, much fascinating folk-lore, many Negro stories that have crept into our culture by way of Uncle Remus, and many forms of artistic expression of which their good photographs make a permanent record. They are anthropologists who evidently understand how to win the confidence of primitive people and they have, in this book, made an important contribution to knowledge about the black folk.

Dr. Simpson went to Patagonia to study the prehistoric remains of the strange animals that inhabited the region while South America was still an island; he found much of interest, but he did not confine himself to digging for bones. He also observed the life about him, and he has written about it with humor and understanding. It is a most uncomfortable country, where the wind blows all the time, a hard, rocky, barren land, which furnishes some kind of sustenance to a curious group of people from many parts of the world. It still is the home of such curious creatures as the guanaco, a cousin of the llama and the camel, and of the armadillo. The whole round of life is in the book, which is an example of what a travel book should be. Dr. Simpson went out for the American Museum of Natural History and brought back many fine specimens; he also had a good time in spite of the physical difficulties.

A New Richard III

The biography list is short but of a high quality. Its most interesting item is a life of Richard III from an entirely new angle, called *Richard III: The Tragic King* (McBride, $3). The author is Philip Lindsay, who is a son of Norman Lindsay, the Australian novelist, and himself a writer of promising fiction. It is his notion that Richard III was anything else but the villain of the Shakespearean and the popular conception, and that Henry VII was the villain of the piece. His main purpose is to show that Richard did not order the murder of the little Princes, that they were put to death at the behest of Henry, and that Henry, through his control of the chroniclers of the period, succeeded in blackening the character of his predecessor and hereditary enemy. He also insists that Richard was not a hunchback at all, and that aside from his rather short stature, he was a fine looking man, not so strikingly handsome as his brother Edward, but a long way from being the monster he is usually depicted.

The book has all the story-value of a well-constructed detective story, and in addition to its careful study of the historical evidence available, it takes up in detail the findings of the commission

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which only last year examined the alleged bones of the Princes. Mr. Lindsay contends that these bones were probably those of human sacrifices, killed at the time of the building of the Tower of London. He does not seem to the Landscaper completely convincing in his effort to change Richard from a villain to a hero, but the job is a good one, and in addition the book is a most lively and engaging history of the Wars of the Roses, full of battles and intrigues, and altogether one of the most readable books about the period that is to be found anywhere.

Portrait of a Humanist

Another distinguished biography is *Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson* by E. M. Forster (Harcourt, Brace, $3), which is a study of an English philosopher and humanitarian who spent the greater part of his life teaching in King's College, Cambridge. He was a close friend of Mr. Forster during part of his life, and the book is filled with sympathy and understanding, in addition to being an admirable piece of writing, as one would expect from the pen of the author of *A Passage to India*, one of the best novels of this generation. Dickinson is best-known, perhaps, for his book *The Greek Way of Life;* an admirer of Socrates as a child, he remained Greek to the end of his days, although there were Chinese influences at work, also, as he found through his love for Confucius a deep sympathy with the Chinese. He visited India, too, during his travel years, but did not like it because he found it a country devoted to religion that seemed to him not to touch the life or the art of the people, which is in itself a key to his character.

He also spent some time in the United States, and was not very happy here, as he saw what he called "the Chicago spirit" dominating not only this country, but spreading its evil influence abroad as well. Mr. Forster willingly admits that he set himself a hard task in writing a book about a superior human being who was not great in the usual sense of the word; he has succeeded in a fine portrait, which has in it much of the best of English character. The Landscaper is one who regrets that Mr. Forster has not gone on with his fiction, but anything he writes bears the unmistakable mark of a highly distinguished mind, and the present volume is very much worth while.

A Victorian Child

Of autobiographies, Lord Berners's *First Childhood* (Farrar and Rinehart, $2), is the best available, and one of the most entertaining of the season's books besides. Lord Berners was a "sport," an intelligent and original child born into a Victorian household, with all its stuffy notions about life, which he did not approve of at all and which he did everything possible to upset. He writes with charm and humor, and the first part of the book particularly dealing with his earlier years is delicious. He eventually went off to one of those abominable English schools, into whose hard and fast pattern he did not fit; the headmaster was a sadist, and the boys a miserable lot, except the athletes. This is not fresh material, and therefore hardly so interesting as the first chapters, but the whole book is good reading. The author is now a distinguished composer and a highly original person; he will continue his autobiography, and it is a safe guess that the rest of it will be worth keeping an eye out for.

A valuable addition to the many books about our own West in its wild

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

days is *Frontier Fighter: The Autobiography of George W. Coe* (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50), the life story of a man who rode with Billy the Kid.

Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return: A Narrative of Ideas* (Norton, $2.50), is the story of the so-called "Lost Generation," a tag furnished by Gertrude Stein, and used, as many will recall, in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*. It is Mr. Cowley's theory that a whole group of younger writers who came along about the time of the World War were uprooted by the conflict either actually or literarily, and that many of them have found themselves since their return to the America of which they were once so scornful by espousing the cause of the workers. It is a generalization that is hardly warranted and one can not escape the feeling that there is too much ego in Mr. Cowley's cosmos, but the book is well written, and in spite of its faults, a worth while record of a literary and artistic movement that once existed, and which has now passed into another phase.

The Shadow of Marx

Like most of the followers of Karl Marx, Mr. Cowley sees everything in terms of the collapse of capitalism, even to the suicide of a young wastrel like Harry Crosby, the American poet who tried everything and found life so unsatisfactory that he killed a woman and himself. In short, a book that has already kicked up a fine controversy, and which is definitely provocative. The Landscaper's respect for the Lost Generation would be greater if he himself had not watched it in its wanderings from the Café dû Dome to the Café Rotonde, and so on; it looked lost enough, but whether its lostness mattered is something else again. Anyway, it is something to have lived to see the exiles come home, and to know that there are sidewalk cafés in New York where they can sit and have their bocks and apéritifs and settle the affairs of the world. In the end, they will probably have as little real effect upon the economic situation as they had on the artistic situation in the days of Dada, but they seem to be able to enjoy themselves, which is something.

Speaking of Karl Marx, a valuable book for those who wish to understand the present status of communism in the world at large is Dr. Albert Rosenberg's *A Brief History of Bolshevism* (Oxford, $3.75), an excellent small book, the gist of which is that the Third International has lost its influence, and that Russia, from being the world-centre of communism, has settled down to making a socialistic state without regard to what other countries do. The triumph of Stalin and the defeat of the internationalist Trotsky marked the turning point, and hereafter we shall have to manufacture our own Red movements, although there are still plenty of young intellectuals who think of America in terms of Moscow, which is one of the stupidest possible points of view. At any rate, Dr. Rosenberg writes clearly and thoughtfully, and his book is informative and intelligent.

Earth and Universe

Two books of recent appearance, one of which may have been mentioned here before, but which is good enough to be called attention to again, deal with what is going on in the world of science, especially in relation to the effort to discover the place of the earth in the universe. The newer volume is Harlan T. Stetson's *Earth, Radio and Stars* (Whittlesey House, $3), in which Dr. Stetson

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

discusses a new science which he calls cosmecology, meaning the relation of the earth to the universe in all its phases. The other book is *Exploring the Upper Atmosphere*, by Dorothy Fisk (Oxford, $1.75), a short and simply written study of the stratosphere, and of cosmic rays. Dr. Stetson promises a synthesis of the findings of cosmecologists in a few years, which ought to be worth living for; maybe we'll find out what we are doing here, the favorite subject of speculation of the human race for centuries. Dr. Stetson's book is not too easy, because of its tendency to run off into mathematical formulæ, which puzzle the Landscaper beyond words, but he has a lot to say even to minds, such as the Landscaper's, which collapse at the prospect of a problem in arithmetic.

That's all for this month, except that the Landscaper wishes to call attention to one of the best books of the year which has gone neglected, and which is *Salah and His American*, by Leland Hall (Knopf), a highly civilized piece of writing and thinking, the true story of an American who went to North Africa and was adopted by an ex-slave named Salah and who did not know just what to do with him. There is both humor and pathos in the tale, and profound truth about people and human relationships. About twelve hundred copies have been sold, which is a sad thought. There has not been a better "neglected book" this year, nor for a good many years.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED